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DE J. CALVIN

PAR

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VIE

DE J. CALVIN

PARIS. — TYPOGRAPHIE DE CH. MEYRUEIS
13, rue Cujas. — 1869.

INTRODUCTION.

CALVIN ET SON ŒUVRE.

Il y avait à Paris, en 1540, un jeune homme sur lequel il semblait que quelque fée bienfaisante eût épuisé tous ses dons. Il appartenait à une famille noble, avait des parents haut placés, et venait d'atteindre vingt et un ans.

Ses adversaires mêmes avouent que c'était alors le plus charmant cavalier qu'on pût voir, bien fait, spirituel, l'air fin et distingué, de manières exquises, très-estimé des grands, très-recherché des dames.

Certes, les élégants gentilshommes ne manquaient pas à la cour de François Ier; mais ce qui y faisait de Théodore de Bèze un type à part, c'est qu'il avait approfondi sous les meilleurs maîtres la philosophie, la jurisprudence, les langues anciennes, le grec surtout, et pouvait lutter d'érudition avec les hommes les plus savants de son temps. De tout cela d'ailleurs, il ne se souciait guère, c'était la poésie qu'il aimait par-dessus tout; et à l'époque dont nous parlons, sa réputation

Rev Dr. A. Pendleton
with the Translator's
respects

CALVIN

ON

SECRET PROVIDENCE.

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TRANSLATED

BY

JAMES LILLIE.

NEW YORK:
ROBERT CARTER, 58 CANAL STREET.

1840.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

If the principles discussed in the following pages were merely theoretical, the translator would deem the time which he has bestowed on preparing them for the press, little better than thrown away. This, however, in his judgment, is not the case. On the contrary, he is persuaded, that the subject treated is eminently practical, and that the glory of God, no less than the good of man, is essentially involved, in maintaining the doctrine that "all things are of God."

The form in which the subject is presented, will, it is hoped, not be uninteresting, as it seems to combine the spirit and point of actual debate, the calmness of solitary determination, and the clearness and force of consecutive reasoning. The desire to unite these seemingly incompatible advantages, has given to speculative discussions the shape of dialogues. But there is much force in the objection urged by Hume against the practice, that the author has some opinions of his own to maintain, and that the arguments which he puts into the

mouth of his antagonist are not always the best that might be found, nor presented in the language most fitted to give them their full weight. Here, however, the reader does not listen to Hervey musing under the feigned names of Theron and Aspasio; nor to the amiable and ingenious Berkeley idealising as Hylas and Philonous: but he hears the greatest of the Reformers vindicating his principles, point by point, against every cavil, that an objector both subtle and fluent could devise. It is not believed that the enemies of Calvinism, will, in general, disclaim their champion, though his vizor is down; while those who are opposed to them will be satisfied with the defence.

There has been recently, and still is, some difference in opinion as to what doctrines were really maintained by Calvin; and opposing controversialists have respectively appealed to his authority in defence of their own sentiments.

A distinguished writer* has amused himself in imagining how the stern Reformer would look, were he to return to earth, on some calling themselves Calvinists, and how quickly he would tell them to begone to the camp of Arminius. The fine fancy of that gentleman will not be wanting to enable him to imagine how Calvin would deal with himself in the case supposed. Though dead, he yet speaks in this little volume, and commands him no longer to assume the uniform of the

* Dr. Channing.

Christian host, but to betake himself forthwith to the camp of Infidel.

It is probable that many, besides the writer referred to, may be offended with the plain language of the Reformer. The translator, however, did not feel at liberty to consult the taste of such, by softening epithets which modern courtesy has discarded. So far as this had been done, the fidelity of the translation must have suffered; and besides, he is not disposed to concur in the indiscriminate condemnation, which it is but too common to pronounce on every thing like severity and indignation in theological debate. He more than suspects that the call for mildness, proceeds fully as often from indifference to all doctrinal distinctions, as from Christian meekness. He cannot shut his eyes to the fact, that the loudest censors of such asperities, are often the very men who go the greatest lengths in political invective. The reason is, they are interested in their politics. Let them remember that we Christians are interested in our creed; and that if they feel justified in their warmth, because they believe their property and even liberty are involved; we are not ashamed of our zeal when convinced that riches inexhaustible and liberty everlasting, are at stake.

The names which Calvin frequently applies to his assailant, and which perhaps will be most apt to shock a merely modern ear, are *dog* and *swine*. It must not, however, be forgotten that Christ himself uses the same expressions, and that in this He is followed by an Apos-

tle. The question for consideration is whether Calvin applies the terms as Christ and Peter did. This is a point for Christian wisdom to determine; and the translator knows not the authority now living on the earth, whose judgment on this matter is entitled to outweigh, or even balance the Reformer's.

It was at first intended that notes should be appended to the text, for the purpose of explaining what might seem obscure, and enforcing what the necessary limits of his reply prevented the author from insisting on. The purpose, however, has been abandoned. Second thoughts suggested it as more respectful to the celebrity of the author, as well as becoming the obscurity of the translator, to send forth the work in its naked majesty. Should the attempt help, in any measure, the present age to appreciate more adequately than it does, him, whom when but 22 years old, Scaliger honoured as the most learned man in Europe, whom Melancthon distinguished among the mighty as pre-eminently "the divine;"* and who almost persuaded Bolingbroke to be a Christian; above all, if it shall be blessed by Almighty God to advance his own honour in the maintenance of his truth, and the salvation of men in the reception of it; the labour of the translator will not have been in vain.

Rhinebeck, 15 *May*, 1840.

* Ὁ θεολογος.

CALUMNIES OF A CERTAIN FELLOW

AGAINST THE DOCTRINE OF

JOHN CALVIN,

ON THE

SECRET PROVIDENCE OF GOD,

WITH CALVIN'S REPLIES.

CALUMNIATOR'S PREFACE.

John Calvin, though your name is very famous in almost the whole world, and your doctrine has undoubtedly many abettors, yet it has also many adversaries. Now, as it is my eager wish, that doctrine were one, as truth is one, and that all if possible might harmonise in it, I have supposed that you should be frankly informed, of the objections continually made to your doctrine, that if they are false, you may refute them, and send the refutation to us, that so we may be able to withstand the gainsayers: and let your reasons be such as the people can understand.

Though there are many things in regard to which many differ with you, yet deferring other matters to another time, I shall at present handle with you, the single argument concerning fate or predestination, both because this point is exciting great tumults in the church,

which we would fain see terminated; and because in this instance, the arguments of the adversaries, cannot as yet be refuted, from the books which you have hitherto published.

I will here set down in a desultory way, certain articles taken from your books, and tossed about in this discussion; I will then subjoin what is ordinarily alleged against each article, that you may perceive what requires an answer.

JOHN CALVIN'S

REPLY TO THE

CALUMNIATOR'S PREFACE.

That my doctrine has many adversaries, is neither unknown nor astonishing to me: for it is no new thing for Christ, beneath whose standard I contend, to be the object of abuse to many babblers. On this account alone I grieve, that through my side is pierced the sacred and eternal truth of God, which ought to be reverently esteemed and adored by the whole world. But when I see that from the beginning, truth has been subject to the many calumnies of the wicked, and that Christ himself (for the Celestial Father has so decreed) must needs be the mark for contradiction, this also should be patiently endured. The virulent assaults of the wicked, however, shall never make me repent of that doctrine, which I am assured has God for its author. Nor have I so little profited, by the many conflicts in which God has exercised me, that I should now be alarmed at your futile outcry. Besides, so far as you are privately concerned, my masked adviser, this is some consolation, that you could not be ungrateful to a man, who had obliged you more than you deserved, without at the same time betraying foul impiety against God. I know indeed that to you Academicians, there is no sweeter game, than under

colour of doubt, to pluck up every particle of faith in the hearts of men: and how witty in your apprehension that raillery is, which you cast against the secret providence of God, is sufficiently evident from your style, dissemble it as you may. But I summon you and your companions to that Tribunal, whence by-and-bye the Celestial Judge, by the lightning alone of his face and breath, will effectually prostrate your audacity. Meanwhile, I am confident, that I can soon render your smartness as offensive to honest and wise readers, as it is secretly pleasant to yourself.

You demand of me a refutation of your treatise which you sent to Paris from Geneva, by stealth; that unknown to me, the poison might be scattered far and wide, without its antidote; and while you affect some desire of information, you suppress your name, for no reason that I can imagine, but because you were aware, that I had something at hand, which would at once destroy the credit of you and your gang. From many marks, however, I can conjecture, nay I may conclude, who you are; but it is of no importance to me, whether you wrote with your own hand, or whether you dictated to a Scottish preacher of your frenzies, with the design of his carrying to Paris, what it was unlawful to publish here. I could wish indeed, either that this pamphlet had another author, or that you were a different man from what you are; and that you will never be till you have felt the loveliness of candour. Though in your intercourse with me you were never deficient in respect, yet it was easy to see how prone you are by nature to cavil. This vice, which you aggravated by childish whims, I endeavoured to correct, but in vain; because your natural tendency had been aggravated by a wretched vanity, which strained after the praise of acuteness, on the ground of a few very silly, and worse than insipid jokes. Nor can you defend yourself by the example of Socrates, who was wont to sift by his objections, opinions of every kind. For, while that man was illustrious, for many distinguished excellencies, they were all

tarnished by that vice, in which alone, you, with no less impropriety than eagerness seek to rival him.

You demand of me a refutation of your treatise, such as the people can understand. Now, I have hitherto laboured to accomodate myself, to the apprehension of the simplest, by a style of instruction, at once perspicuous and pure. But if you receive no statement as argument, except what the sense of carnal man approves, by such proud disdain. you do, with your own hand, bar the approach to that doctrine, the knowledge of which begins in reverence. Nor am I ignorant of the jibes of you, and those like you, with which you assail God's mysteries; just as if everything must lose its grace and authority, that does not strike your fancy. And what is meant by requiring me to refute every one who shall choose to rail at me? For even Socrates, whose authority you falsely allege, would have submitted to no such rule. I for my part have no fondness for indiscriminate imitation; but if there ever was, not only in this age, but in any other, a man who constantly set himself against the wicked, by dissipating their calumnies; even those who dislike and injure me, will give me some credit for that kind of industry. Wherefore your rant is the more intolerable, because, while with the blind impetuosity of impudence, you trample on all my labours, you enjoin a task already three or four times accomplished.

But you maintain there is one point, on which I am worsted by my adversaries; in so far as no sufficient materials for a defence, can be found in anything which I have hitherto published. That point, you say, is predestination or fate. I would it had been your design, either modestly to inquire, or at least to dispute with candour, rather than by outraging all decency, and for the sake of extinguishing the light, to confound things the most opposite. Fate, according to the Stoics, is a necessity springing out of a changeable, and complicated labyrinth, and binding in some measure God himself. Instructed by the Scriptures, I define predestination, as the free counsel of God, by which he regulates the hu-

man race, and all the individual parts of the universe, according to his own immense wisdom, and incomprehensible justice. Now, if the depravity of your disposition, and the lust of contention, and the pride of the devil so blind you, that you see nothing at midday, yet this distinction will demonstrate to all readers who have eyes, what fairness there is in your criticism. Besides, had you not grudged even a glance at my books, you might thence have inferred, how little pleased I am with that profane word *fate;* nay you would have read, that the same objection was long ago, malignantly and invidiously brought against Augustine, by foul fellows, and men like yourself; and in the reply of that pious and holy doctor, there is a brief statement of what is sufficient for my defence to day.

In the articles too, which you say have been extracted from my books, the case with me is the same as with that author of happy memory. As the malevolent were aware, that this doctrine was not popular, they with the design of aggravating the dislike of it, flung about passages, partly mutilated, partly distorted, so that it was impossible for the uninformed, to come to any but an unfavourable judgment. But though at first sight many supposed them extracted from his writings, yet he complains that they were falsely imputed to him; inasmuch as they had either industriously heaped together broken sentences, or by changing a few words, had artfully corrupted pious and sound doctrine, in order to create offence in the minds of the simple. That those articles which you boast of propounding from my books, are precisely of the same kind, wise and honest readers will easily discover, even though I were silent; and to such it will not be troublesome, to compare my doctrine with your foul calumnies. And this I maintain, first of all, that you act neither a manly nor an ingenious part, when you specify no passages, to show intelligent readers, that I write what you allege. For what can be more unjust, when I have published so many books, than vaguely to declare, that out of about fifty volumes, four-

teen articles have been gathered. It had unquestionably been better, were a drop of honesty in you, either to quote my sentences word for word: or if you perceived anything dangerous to have warned your readers of what passages to beware. Whereas, by branding all my works promiscuously, you would destroy the remembrance of them; and what in my books, might be read without any offence, you malignantly corrupt for your own convenience, and so render hateful. Now while I do not blame the prudence of Augustine, in so tempering his replies as to avoid odium, when he met the unprincipled craft of his adversaries, yet I think it better frankly to repel your slanders, than to give the smallest symptom of turning my back.

ARTICLES GATHERED

FROM THE

LATIN AND FRENCH WORKS OF

JOHN CALVIN,

ON THE

SUBJECT OF PREDESTINATION.

Article First, *i. e.* Calumny First.

God, by a simple and pure act of his will, created the greatest part of the world for destruction.

Against the First.

Such is the first article; take likewise what is said against it. They say, the first article is against nature, and against Scripture. Of nature they allege thus. Every animal naturally loves its offspring; now this nature is from God; from which it follows that God loves his offspring. For he would never make animals love their offspring, if he himself likewise did not love his. And this they prove by the following argument. The Lord hath said, "Shall I cause to bring forth, and shall I not bring forth," (Is. lxvi. 9.) Hence by a parity of reason, they deduce the argument, God makes animals love their offspring; therefore he himself loves his offspring. But all men are the offspring of God; for God is the Father of Adam, from whom all men are sprung: therefore he loves all men. But to create in order to destroy,

is not the part of love, but of hatred. Therefore he created no man for destruction. Besides creation is a work of love, not of hatred; consequently in love, not in hatred, God created all men. Moreover, there is no beast so savage, (not to speak of man,) as to design the misery of it's young, in their production. How much less God? Were he not worse than even a wolf? Christ argues thus; "If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more God? Your adversaries also argue thus: If Calvin though wicked, would yet be unwilling to beget a son for misery, how much less God? These and such like things they speak concerning nature.

Of Scripture on the other hand, they speak thus: God saw all that he had made, and it was very good; therefore, man, whom he had made, was very good. But if God had created him for destruction, he had created a good thing for destruction, and loves to destroy what is good; which is impious even to think. Besides God created one man, to place him in paradise, which is a happy life; therefore, he created all men for a happy life. For all were created in one. And if all fell in Adam, all must have stood in Adam, and that on the same condition as Adam. Again, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Again, "God is not willing that any should perish; but would that all should come to the knowledge of the truth." Again, if God created the greatest part of the world for destruction, it follows that his anger must be greater than his mercy; and yet the Scriptures declares that he is slow to anger; so that his anger extends only to the third or fourth generation, while his mercy reaches even to the thousandth.

J. Calvin's Reply to the first article and the criticism of the Calumniator.

The first article you take hold of, is, that God, by a simple and pure act of

his will, created the greatest part of the world for destruction. Now, all that about "the greatest part of the world," and "the simple pure act of the will of God" is fictitious, and the product of the workshop of your malice. For, though God from the beginning decreed whatsoever was to come to pass with the whole human race; yet this way of talking is no where to be met with in my writings, that the end of creation is eternal destruction. Therefore like a swine, you upset with your snout, a doctrine of good odour, in order to find in it something offensive. Besides, though the will of God is to me the highest of all reasons, yet I everywhere teach, that where the reason of his counsels and his works, does not appear, the reason is hid with him; so that he has always decreed justly and wisely. Therefore I not only reject, I detest the trifling of the Schoolmen about absolute power, because they separate his justice from his authority. Now see, dog, what you gain by your froward barking. I, subjecting as I do the human race to the will of God, loudly declare that he decrees nothing without the best

reason, which if unknown to us now, shall be cleared up at last. You, thrusting forward your "simple and pure act of will" impudently upbraid me with that, which I openly reject in a hundred places or more. At the same time, I do acknowledge this as my doctrine, that not merely by the permission of God, but by his secret counsel also, Adam fell, and in his fall, dragged down all his descendants into everlasting perdition. Both assertions, as I perceive, are offensive to you, as repugnant at once to nature and Scripture. Your argument from nature, is founded on the love which every animal naturally feels towards its own offspring. You hence infer, that God who has inspired even brute beasts with this affection must love men no less, since they are his offspring. But it is too gross to insist on finding in God the author of nature, whatever you discern in the ox, and the ass; as if God were bound by the very same laws which he has given to his creatures. To secure the continuance of every race of animals, God has endowed each with the appetite of generating offspring. Now expostulate with

him, why from all eternity content with himself alone, he kept his energy, as it were, barren. Undoubtedly he must be always like himself. If then, you may be judge, he violated the order of nature, so long as he chose rather to be without offspring, than to put forth his productive power. Besides, while beasts fight even to death, in behalf of their young, how comes it that God allows little infants to be torn and devoured by tigers, or bears, or lions, or wolves? Is it because his arm is too short to reach forth protection to his own? You perceive how wide a field is open to me, if I cared about exposing your follies; but this alone is enough for me, that there are evidences of God's love, toward the whole human race, sufficient to convict all who perish, of ingratitude. Nor yet is this inconsistent with that peculiar love which he restricts to the few, whom he is pleased to select among many. Certainly he openly declared, by his ancient adoption of the family of Abraham, that he by no means embraces the whole human family, with equal regard. So by rejecting Esau, and preferring his younger brother Jacob,

he gave an illustrious proof of that free favour, which he bestows only on whom he pleases. Moses proclaims that one nation had been chosen by God to the rejection of all the rest. The prophets every where affirm, that the only reason of the superiority of the Jews, was the unmerited favour of God. Will you deny him to be God; because in this you discover no resemblance to a tiger or a bear? It was not in vain that Christ addressing the little flock (and not the human race, nor even indiscriminately the Jewish nation) said, "fear not, it has pleased the Father to give you the kingdom;" because none but those whom he reconciles to himself, in his Only Begotten Son, experience his paternal love, in the hope of eternal life. Now, if you mean to subject God to the laws of nature, you will accuse him of injustice, in condemning us all to the penalty of eternal death, on account of the sin of one. One sinned, all are dragged to punishment; and not only so, but from the crime of one they all contract contagion, and are born corrupted and tainted with a mortal malady. Worthy Critic! what

have you to say to this? Will you condemn God as cruel, because he has precipitated all his offspring into ruin, for the fault of one man? For though Adam destroyed himself and his descendants, yet we must ascribe the corruption and the guilt, to the secret determination of God; because, the sin of one man were nothing to us, if the Celestial Judge did not doom us to eternal ruin on account of it.

And observe, how skilfully you quote a passage of Isaiah to gloze your error. Whereas it seemed incredible, that the Church of God, which in Babylonish captivity, not only was deprived of her children, but had become barren, should, with renovated vigour, be more fruitful than before; God speaks thus: "Shall not I, by whose strength women bring forth, be able also to produce offspring?" Under this pretext, you compel God to assume all the properties of the brutes. You audaciously argue, because God makes animals love their offspring, that he too must love his offspring. Though this were admitted, it would not follow that he loves them in the same way. Be-

sides, this does not prove, that he may not as a just Judge reject those, whom, as the best of Fathers, he follows with affection and indulgence.

Again, you object that creation is a work of love, not of hatred; that consequently God creates from love, and not from hatred. But you do not distinguish, that though all are odious to God in Adam, yet his love shines in creation. Therefore, any one endowed with moderate judgment, and candour, will acknowledge the frivolity of that which you fancy so plausible. What follows, it is not so much for me to refute with my pen, as for the magistrate severely to punish by the sword. Shall it be imputed to my books, that men are undeniably born to misery? How comes it that we are exposed not merely to temporal miseries, but also to eternal death, if not because God has cast us into a common condemnation, on account of the sin of one man. In this miserable ruin of the human race, it is not my opinion that is read, but God's manifest work that is beheld. You, with no misgiving, vomit the impious declaration, that God is worse

than any wolf, if he resolves to create men for misery. Some are born blind, others deaf, and some are prodigiously deformed. If you, indeed, may be judge, God is cruel in afflicting his offspring with such disadvantages before they come into light. But by-and-bye you shall feel, how much better it had been for you, never to have seen at all, than to have been so perspicacious in discussing the secrets of God. You, forsooth, accuse God of injustice, nay call him a monster, if he manage the human race, in a manner different from what we do our children. Why then does he create some dull, others stupid, and others idiots? As some of the Jews fables of the fauns and satyrs being unfinished, because their Maker was cut short by the Sabbath, will you be so absurd as to maintain that such persons slipped incomplete out of the hands of God? Such sad sights should rather teach us reverence and modesty, than produce a debate out of our brains with the Maker of heaven and earth. If I meet an idiot, I am admonished by the sight, what God might have created me. As many as

are stupid and dull, just so many mirrors does God present, in which I may behold a power, no less awful than wonderful. But you allow yourself to rail at him as worse than a wolf, for consulting so ill for his creatures.

True, Christ declares, that God who is good, acts more kindly towards his sons, than men who are evil; but before you can turn this to your purpose, you must prove, that all are equally the sons of God. Now, it is clear, that all lost eternal life in Adam; whereas the grace of adoption is special. Whence, it will rather follow, that so many as are alienated from God, are abhorred by him. Your texts, are darts hurled at random, by the hand of a madman. God saw the things which he had made, and they were very good; hence you infer that man was very good; and again conclude, that God was unjust if he created a good being for destruction.

The nature of man's original rectitude I have sufficiently expounded, and more than sufficiently, in many passages. Doubtless he was not better than the devil, before he had fallen from his in-

tegrity. Now were I to grant you, that man, as well as apostate angels, was created for happiness; and yet maintain, that in respect of future defection, they were destined to destruction; what will you make of it? For, undoubtedly, God knew what would happen to both; and what he himself would do, he at the same time decreed. As to permission, we shall consider it afterwards in its own place. But now if you object that the foreknowledge of God, is not the cause of evil, I would only demand of you, if God foresaw the fall, both of the devil and of man before creation, why did he not by a timely precaution prevent their proneness to fall? From the beginning of the world, the devil forthwith alienated himself from the hope of salvation; man as soon as created, overwhelmed himself and posterity in fatal ruin. If their perseverance was in the hand of God, why did he suffer them to fall? Nay why was neither furnished with even a moderate degree of constancy? Turn as you will, I will hold this principle, that however weak and liable to fall, man might be created, this weakness was very good; because

his ruin was so soon to show that out of God, there was no strength, no stability. Whence it is also evident, that your prating about men being made for happiness, is lame and thoughtless assertion. For though I acknowledge that there was nothing in man contrary to salvation, I prove that happiness was not predestinated for all in the secret council of God. I will briefly repeat the same thing in other words. If the natural completeness, with which man was endowed at his first creation, be alone considered, then he was made for happiness, inasmuch as no cause of death will there be found. If on the other hand we inquire concerning secret predestination, we come upon that deep abyss, which should call forth instant admiration.

Besides, if you were imbued with the slightest relish for piety, you would readily acknowledge that these words "all things were very good," were not intended to express their perfection, as if the Holy Spirit declared, that nothing was wanting to the excellence of any creature, but rather to cut off occasion of railing from you, and those like you.

For, however, you may deny that it was good for men to be created under this law, by which his fall was immediately to corrupt the whole world, yet God declares that this arrangement was pleasing to himself, and therefore most upright. That you may the better understand the meaning of Moses, he is not asserting how just or upright man was; but to quell your barking, he teaches that the constitution established by God in regard to man, could not be surpassed in rectitude. Accordingly, although in speaking of each of God's works, he declares that God saw what he had made, and they were every one good, he does not affirm any such thing of man in particular; but to the narrative of *his* creation, he only adds in general, "whatever God made was very good," under which declaration, it is unquestionable, we must comprehend what Solomon teaches, that the wicked are created for the day of evil. The sum is; though man by nature was good, this rectitude, which was frail and fading, was not inconsistent with the divine predestination, which doomed him to perish for his own sin, who, consider-

ing merely the purity of his nature, nay the excellence with which he was adorned, had been created for happiness. And therefore you falsely and foolishly infer that he was created to perish though good; when it is manifest he fell by his own infirmity, and did not perish till he became obnoxious to a just condemnation. That these two things are mutually harmonious, we shall see more clearly by-and-bye. You object that God does not desire the death of the sinner. But mark what follows in the prophet, the invitation of all to repentance. Pardon, therefore, is offered to all who return. Now we must ascertain, whether the conversion which God requires, depends on every man's free will, or whether it is the special gift of God. In so far then, as all are invited to repent, the prophet properly denies that the death of the sinner is desired. But the reason why he does not convert all, is hid with himself.

Your hacknied quotation from Paul, that God would have all men saved, I have, in my judgment, elsewhere sufficiently shown, lends no countenance to your error. For it is more certain than

certainty itself, that Paul is not there speaking of individuals, but refers to orders and classes of employments. He had been enjoining prayers, in behalf of kings and other governors, and all who exercised the office of magistrate. But inasmuch as all who then bore the sword, were the professed enemies of the church, it might seem absurd that the church should pray for their salvation. To obviate the difficulty Paul extends the grace of God even to them.

There is perhaps more colour in the words of Peter, that "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;" if, however, there is any ambiguity in the former clause, it is removed by the explanation, which is immediately subjoined. Certainly in so far as God would receive all to repentance, he would have no one perish. But in order to be received they must come. Now, the Spirit every where proclaims, that divine grace first comes to men, who till they are drawn remain the willing slaves of carnal contumacy. If you had the smallest judgment remaining, would you not perceive the wide difference between

these two: that the stony hearts of men, become hearts of flesh, so as to lose all self-complacency, and suppliantly entreat for pardon; then, when they are thus changed, that pardon is received. God declares that both these are the gifts of his kindness, the new heart for repentance, and the gracious pardon of the suppliants. Unless God were ready to receive all who truly implore his mercy, he would not say, "return unto me, and I will return unto you." But if repentance were the effect of the will of man, Paul would not say, "if peradventure God may *give* them repentance." Nay, unless the same God, who with his own voice calls all to repentance, drew his elect by the secret influences of his Spirit, Jeremiah would not say, "Turn me, Oh Lord, and I shall be turned; for when thou turnedst me, I repented."

If any modesty could be looked for in a dog, this solution should have been familiar to you from my writings, as a thing ten times repeated. But even reject it if you will, you will yet derive no more countenance from Paul, than from Ezekiel. There is no occasion for anxious

debate, regarding the mode in which God would have all men saved; for these two things salvation and the knowledge of the truth, are not to be separated. Now answer! If God determined to make known his truth to all, why since the time that the Gospel began to be proclaimed, are there so many nations that his pure truth never reached? Besides, why has he not equally opened the eyes of all, when the interior illumination of the Spirit, vouchsafed but to few, is necessary to faith? This knot also you have to untie. As no one comes to God, except he who is drawn by the secret influence of his Spirit, why are not all indiscriminately drawn, if he is determined that all should be saved? For the discrimination demonstrates, that there is some secret way, in which he excludes many from salvation.

How it is that the mercy of God reaches to the thousandth generation, you will never perceive while you are blinded by the pride which puffs you up. For there is no promise of such a mercy, as was to abolish utterly the curse, with which the whole progeny of Adam was overwhelm-

ed; but the mercy promised, was to make its way forever to the unworthy, in spite of all the obstacles which might oppose. Thus God passed by many sons of Abraham when he chose Isaac alone. So when Isaac had begotten twins, the same God determined that his mercy should rest only on Jacob. Yet though God gives proof of his anger against many, still this remains undeniable, that he is inclined to goodness, slow to anger; because in the long suffering with which he tolerates the reprobate, there is no obscure display of his goodness.

Now observe how your frivolous quibbles entangle yourself while I escape with such ease. That the mercy of God may exceed his anger, you insist that more must be chosen to salvation than destruction; now though I were to grant this, yet God will be unjust to those few, if your calumnies may be believed. If he do not love his offspring you pronounce him worse than a wolf. If then there is but one against whom he exercises his anger, how will he escape the charge of cruelty? Nor may you object, that the causes of anger are in men them-

selves; because comparing anger with mercy, you contend merely concerning relative extent; as if by choosing more to salvation, God might prove himself merciful. Whereas God commends his love toward us in a totally different way, viz. on the one hand, by pardoning so many, and so various offences, and on the other by contending with the obstinate malice of men, till it come to its height.

Article Second.

God not only predestinated to damnation; but he also predestinated Adam to the causes of damnation; whose fall he not only foresaw, but determined from eternity, by a secret decree, and ordained that he should fall. And that this might come to pass in his time, he set forth the apple the cause of the fall.

Against the Second.

They say that the second too is a doctrine of the devil, and they demand of us, Calvin, to show where it is written in the word of God.

J. Calvin's Reply.

In the second article you are the same man still. Produce the passage from my

writings, where I teach that the apple was set before Adam to cause his fall. This to be sure is one of your popular arts, to darken the minds of the simple with lies, lest they should rise to the truth, which is remote from common carnal sense. But lest I should seem to dispute about words, I acknowledge that I wrote thus; that the fall of Adam was not a matter of chance, but ordained in the secret counsel of God. In simply denouncing this a doctrine of the devil, you must no doubt fancy yourself a judge of no mean authority; otherwise, you could not expect to overturn with one abusive assertion, a point which I have established by powerful arguments. You demand a testimony from Scripture, to demonstrate, that Adam did not fall, without the secret decree of God. Whereas, if you had only read a few pages with attention, you could not help seeing, what is every where obvious, that God manages all things according to his secret counsel. You fancy a foreknowledge in God, which sluggishly beholds from heaven the life of man: God himself laying his hand on the helm of the

universe, does not allow his power to be separated from his foreknowledge. Certainly this reasoning belongs to Augustine, not to me. If God foresaw what he was unwilling should happen, then he is not supreme. Therefore he determined whatever should be, because independently of his will, nothing could be. If you reckon this absurd, yet you cannot escape it even with your fancy; because he ought to have at least applied to the mischief, the remedy within his own power, though it is clear he did not do so. God foresaw the fall of Adam. He had the power of preventing it. He was not willing to prevent it. Why he was unwilling no reason can be given, except that his will took the opposite direction. If you allow yourself to contend with God, accuse him too, of fitting man for ruin, by the weakness in which he created him. You say that Adam fell by free will. I reply that to keep him from falling, he needed that constancy and fortitude, with which God endows his elect, when he determines that they shall hold fast their integrity. Sure it is, unless new strength is supplied from

heaven every moment, we are frail enough to perish a thousand times. God supports those whom he has chosen, and they persevere with invincible fortitude. Why should he not have supplied Adam with this, if he willed him to stand unhurt. Surely we must here be silent, or confess with Solomon that God made all things for himself; even the wicked for the day of evil. If the absurdity offend you, think that is no vain repetition, which declares the judgments of God to be a great deep. If the incomprehensible counsel of God, could be contained in the little measure of our capacity, it was in vain that Moses proclaimed, that the revelations of the Law were for us, and our children, while his secret things belonged to himself. You demand a quotation proving that God did not prevent the fall of Adam, because he was unwilling; as if indeed the memorable answer did not sufficiently prove it, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Whence Paul infers that he hath not mercy on all because he doth not choose. And doubtless without any commentator at all, the words plainly tell us, that God is bound by no law,

to show indiscriminate mercy to all: but that he is his own Arbiter in pardoning whom he pleases, and passing by others. Surely it was the same God, of whom the prophet asserts "he doeth according to his will." Now if you say that he unwillingly yielded, when Adam fell, you must suppose that Satan was victorious in the contest, and like the Manicheans, you will have two principles. Paul too handling this subject, does not rashly compare God to the potter, who was at liberty out of the same mass, to make whatever variety of vessels he thought proper. The Apostle certainly might have begun at sin; though he does not, but defends the unconstrained right and sovereignty of God, in the work itself. And when he adds that all had been shut up in unbelief, does he teach that this happened in spite of God, or rather that God was the author of it? If you object that all were condemned for unbelief, merely because they deserved it, the context is against you, because Paul is discoursing of the secret judgments of God; and the exclamation, "oh the depth," &c., is inconsistent with such a supposition.

Therefore as Christ was predestinated from the beginning to succour the lost, so God determined in his own incomprehensible counsel, how he was to illustrate his own glory, by the fall of Adam. I acknowledge, indeed, when he vindicates the free course of his mercy, he speaks of the human race, as it had already perished in Adam; but the same reason was always valid before the fall of Adam, that his own will, is to him a sufficient ground of mercy, when such is his pleasure. This will, moreover, though it depends on nothing else, and has no prior cause, is yet founded in the best reason, and the highest equity. For though the license of man requires the bridle of the Law, it is otherwise with God, who is a law to himself, and whose will is the rule of the most perfect righteousness.

Article Third.

The sins which are committed, are committed not only by the permission, but also by the

will of God. For it is frivolous to make a distinction between the permission and the will of God, so far as sin is concerned. Those who do so wish to gain God's favour by compliments and adulation.

Against the Third.

Against the third, concerning the difference between will and permission, they allege this. Calvin says, that he is a prophet of God; and we say that Calvin is a prophet of the devil. Now, one of us must be saying what is false. For if he is a prophet of God, we lie; but if he is a prophet of the devil, he himself lies, in saying that he is a prophet of God. But if both these are by the will of God; that is, if God will that Calvin should say, he is a prophet of God, and that we should say, he is the prophet of the devil, he wills incompatible things; which is impossible. For if God will a lie, he does not will truth, or if he will truth he does not will a lie. Whence it follows, if he wishes one party to speak truth, he is unwilling that the other should lie. But one or other of the parties undoubtedly lies, it lies, therefore, not by the will, but by the permission of God. There is then a difference even in God between permission and volition.

They also bring forward many clear examples, of the difference between volition and permission; especially from the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel, where God after largely upbraiding his people for their unwillingness to obey his precepts, at last concludes thus; go ye, serve every one his filthy god, since ye obey not me. As if he said this, I permit you to follow your own lust, since ye will not obey my precepts. And this seems to be the same, as he had spoken before in the same chapter; "As they rejected my laws, I delivered to them precepts not good." Now God did not give the Israelites precepts

that were not good; for all God's precepts are good. But because they rejected God's good precepts, he deserted them; and they, deserted by God fell into bad precepts; just as the prodigal son, when deserted by his father, or rather when his father was deserted, fell into wantonness; and as Paul teaches, because men did not love the truth, God sent them a spirit of error to believe a lie.

Such seems to be the import also, of that passage in the fourth chapter of Amos, "Go to Bethel and sin, since ye love to do it." So now, as men are unwilling to obey God, who declares that he does not will sin, God has permitted spirits of error to exist, who teach that God wills sin; that those who are unwilling to obey the truth, may obey a lie.

They also bring forward the passage from Zechariah, where God declares himself angry with the nations that were at rest; because when he was slightly incensed against the Israelites, the heathens aggravated the punishment; that is, they more grievously vexed the Israelites, than the anger of God could tolerate; therefore, it was by the permission, not by the will of God.

They adduce a similar instance from the Prophet Obadiah, who reproves the Israelites, for afflicting the Jews, more grievously than the anger of God demanded. They also refer to the example of the prodigal son, which I have already touched. If you say that he ran his vicious course by the will of his father; it were most absurd; it was then by his permission. So, the guilty, they say, are the prodigal children of God, and sin by the permission, not by the will of God. Also that saying of Christ, "Will ye also go away?" Certainly he was unwilling that they should go away, but he permitted it. Finally they appeal to common sense, which dictates a difference between volition and permission; according to which common sense, Christ was accustomed to teach divine things, and which if you subvert, all the parables of Christ must perish, because common sense alone can judge of them.

J. Calvin's Reply.

The third article no less than the others, betrays your extreme fondness, for fœtid calumnies. If you will attack my doctrine, why not at least show candour enough to quote my own language. In our present discussion, I maintain the distinction between permission and volition to be frivolous. You oppose what you fancy a witty subtlety, but what is really a silly sophism, viz.: If God wills all things, he wills incompatible things, inasmuch as you call me a prophet of the devil, while I affirm myself to be a faithful servant of God. This apparent inconsistency, indeed, dazzles your eyes; but truly, God himself, who knows well how at once to will, and not to will the same thing, is not concerned about your dimness of sight. Whenever God raised up true prophets, he certainly willed, that they should actively and strenuously contend, in maintaining the doctrine of his law; false prophets arose who laboured to subvert that doctrine: there must be a conflict betwixt them; but God did not conflict with himself when he raised up both. You

here thrust the divine toleration in my face; while he openly proclaims (Deut. xiii. 1,) that no false prophets arise, whom he does not ordain, either to try the faith of his own, or to blind the unbelieving. "If a false prophet shall arise among you," says Moses, "your God tries you." You, by a most impertinent commentary, transfer to a totally different quarter, what Moses ascribes, not rashly to God. Either deny that it is the prerogative of God to examine the hearts of his people, or yield at length to the clear and indubitable truth, that false prophets, are God's instruments in that examination of which he chooses to be recognised as the author.

Ezekiel (xiv. 9,) is still clearer; "if a deceived prophet has brought forth anything, I, God have deceived that prophet, and my hand is upon him." You enjoin us to be content with mere permission. God declares his own will and hand to be at work. Now mark, which witness is better entitled to belief: God speaking of himself by his Spirit, the only fountain of wisdom, or you prating of his unknown mysteries, according to your

carnal silly apprehension. What? When God calls Satan as the executioner of his vengeance, and openly commissions him to deceive, does this differ in no respect from a simple permission? The voice of God (1 Kings xxii. 20, 21,) is distinct enough; "who for us will deceive Ahab?" And there is no obscurity in the command given to Satan; "Go and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets."

I would also know whether doing and permitting are the same thing. Because David had secretly abused his neighbour's wife, God (2 Sam. xii. 11,) declares, that he will bring it about, that his wives shall be dragged to similar infamy, in the sight of the sun. He does not say I will allow it to be done, but I will do it. You, to aid him with your hollow help, plead permission as an apology. David himself was of a very different mind, who, reflecting on the dreadful judgment of God, exclaims, "I am dumb because *thou* didst it." So also, when Job blesses God, he does not merely acknowledge that by the divine permission, he had been spoiled by the

robbers, but distinctly affirms that God had taken away what he had given.

If the same rule hold in giving and receiving, then by your authority, wealth cannot be a gift of God; but must flow to us casually by the divine permission. Now, though you, with your corrupt crew, cease not to rail, yet God will justify himself. But we will reverently adore mysteries, which far transcend our comprehension, till a full knowledge of them shine forth, when, face to face, we shall behold Him who now can be discerned only as in a glass. Then, says Augustine, shall be seen in the clearest light of wisdom, what the faith of the pious holds, how certain, and immutable, and most efficacious is the will of God, how many things it could do, but chooses not, while it chooses nothing, to which it is unequal. But from the lips of the same pious writer, I answer you on the point in hand. "These are the great works of the Lord, immaculate in respect of all his volitions, and so wisely immaculate, that when the angelic and human creature had sinned, that is, had done not what he, but what itself willed,

even by that same volition of the creature, by which what the Creator did not will was done, God accomplished his own design: wisely employing like one supremely good, even evil, for the damnation of those, whom he justly predestinated to punishment, and for their salvation whom he benignly predestinated to pardon. For, in so far as they were concerned, they did what God did not will; but in reference to the Omnipotence of God, it was impossible they could do this; inasmuch, as by this very acting against God's will, his will concerning themselves, was performed. Therefore, the great works of the Lord, are immaculate in respect of all his volitions, so that in a wonderful and ineffable way, even that which is against his will, does not happen without his will; because it would not happen if he did not allow it; nor does he allow it unwillingly, but willingly. Nor, as good, could he allow evil to be done, unless as Omnipotent he could bring good out of it."

As to the Scripture examples which you adduce, they are just as much to the purpose, as mixing wine with oil. God,

by Ezekiel, addressing the disobedient Jews, says; "Go ye, serve every man idols." I acknowledge, indeed, that this is not a word of command, but of rejection of the impious mixture by which the Jews adulterated his legitimate worship. But what more will you infer from this, except that God sometimes permits what he reprobates and condemns; as if, forsooth, it were not universally agreed, that in such forms of expression, God sometimes commands, and sometimes permits. He says, in the law, six shalt thou work; it is a concession; for, consecrating to himself the seventh day, he left men free on the other six. In another way too he anciently allowed divorce to the Jews, which he by no means approved. Here he indignantly devotes the hypocritical and perfidious to idols; because he would not have his name profaned. But how comes it that you forget, that the point in debate is the secret Providence of God, by which he destines and turns all the agitations of the world, to his own purpose according to his pleasure?

Moreover, by corrupting another pas-

sage, so unskilfully and so perversely, you show that nothing is sacred to an impious and profane man. God's words are; "because they were unwilling to obey my precepts, I gave them precepts not good." Here you trifle by telling us, that when they were deserted by God, they fell into idolatry. Whereas, there is no doubt God means the Jews were bound in servitude by the Chaldeans, who compelled them to obey their tyrannical laws. Now the question is, whether God merely permitted the Jews to be haled by the Chaldeans into exile; or whether he employed them as his chosen instruments for chastising the sins of his people. Indeed, if you still seek a pretext, in the permission of God, all the prophets must be consigned to the flames, who declare at one time, that Satan is sent by God to deceive; at another that the Chaldeans, or Assyrians are sent to ravage. Again they tell us that the same God hissed for the Egyptians, when about to employ their agency; that the Assyrians were his mercenaries; that Nebuchadnezzar was his servant in spoiling Egypt; and that the Assyrians

were the axe in his hand, and the rod of his anger, in the destruction of Judea. Lest I should be tedious, I omit innumerable other instances.

You are guilty of not less drunken audacity, when you pretend that God sends a spirit of error to the unbelieving that they should believe a lie, merely, inasmuch, as he allows false teachers to exist. When you prate in this way, do you suppose that your readers are so blind as not to see, a totally different meaning in Paul's words, "God sent strong delusion?" But it is not wonderful that he should babble thus licentiously, who either supposes there are no divine judgments at all, or securely despises the very meaning of the word judgment. For no one of sound intellect will say, that a judge does nothing when he inflicts punishment, or that he inefficiently leaves to others, what is peculiar to his own office.

But it is in vain that you strive to alarm, and harass me, with your barking. You allege there are by the permission of God, erroneous spirits teaching that God wills sin. As the very same re-

proach was cast on Paul, by men of your stamp, there is no reason why I should take it amiss, to be associated with him. You quote from Zechariah, that God was incensed against those nations, that vexed the Israelites more cruelly, than his displeasure would tolerate. Are you then so absurd, as to suppose there was not strength enough in God, to prohibit these injuries, if it was his pleasure that his people should be chastised more mildly? You will object, that such is the sound of the words. But you are thrice, yea four times stupid, if you do not perceive, that, in one way, God wonderfully tries the patience of his own, by a severe ordeal; and meanwhile, in another, is displeased with the insolence of the enemy, when he beholds him extravagantly exulting in victory, and rushing into barbarity. Besides nothing is more evident, than that your follies, if let alone, mutually destroy each other. For God either commanded, or permitted, those profane nations, gently to chastise the Jews. If you answer there was a command, I maintain, however causelessly troublesome, those neighbours may

have been to God's unhappy exiles, yet they would have been free from blame, provided they had kept due bounds. For who would make a fault of their obedience to God? Yet you make a distinction between permission and command, inasmuch as when God had ordered them to inflict light punishment on his people, they by his permission exceeded their limits. On this principle, the Israelites were worthy of reproof, because they afflicted their brethren more greviously, than the divine anger allowed. Now your absurdity is too blind, in imagining they would have been free from blame, if they had only kept the due mean. For I will always drag you back to this point, that the Israelites were not merely guilty by divine permission (as you fancy,) of excessive harshness, but also of unjustly taking up arms against their brethren. You scruple not to assert, that there was nothing wrong in undertaking the war, because God was angry at the Jews, and armed the Israelites, to execute his commanded vengeance. But I maintain they sinned twice, because in the first place, they had no in-

tention of obeying God, however they were the instruments of his vengeance; and then, the very atrocity they displayed, showed that righteousness was not in all their thoughts.

Besides, in your principle itself, you display shameful ignorance in fancying that men slip and err, by God's permission, in so far as they are concerned. For it is an impious and sacriligious figment, that God permits any evil to men, in respect of them, since it is evident he severely prohibits, and forbids whatever is contrary to his commands. But why he chooses to allow men to err, nay dooms those to error in his secret decree, whom he commands to hold the straight course,—of this it is the part of sober modesty to be ignorant; while it belongs to mad temerity to cavil about it as you do.

As to Christ's permission to his disciples to depart, you may infer how skilfully you interpret the passage, from the fact, that he exhorts them to perseverance, by setting before them the defection of others. For when he mournfully asks them, (John vi. 67,) "will ye also go away?" he, as it were, puts a bridle

on them to prevent them wandering with apostates. Does this way of speaking seem to you a permission? I acknowledge, indeed, that common sense dictates a difference between ordering and permitting, but on this point we have no discussion. The question is, whether God inactively beholds what is done on earth; or whether he governs with supreme sway all the actions of men.

Or, if the word permission pleases you so much, answer, is the permission willing or unwilling? This last supposition is overthrown by what we read in the psalm, that God does whatever he pleases. But if it be a willing permission, then you cannot, without impiety, fancy him inactive. Whence it follows, he regulates by his counsel, what he chooses shall come to pass.

Now it is too silly in you, to think of subjecting so sublime a mystery of God, to the rule of common sense. For, as to your objection, that Christ accommodated all his instructions on divine things, to common sense, he himself expressly denies it and convicts you both of lying, and impudence. Do you not hear how

he declares, that he spake in parables, that men in general by hearing, might not hear? It is true, indeed, that the Holy Spirit, always as it were stammers, like a nurse, for our sakes; but common sense is still very far from being a fit judge of that doctrine, which transcends the capacity of angels. Paul exclaims, that the natural man perceiveth not the things of God. Therefore, he enjoins all who would advance in the celestial school, to become fools, and to be emptied of their own sense. In fine, God everywhere claims for himself the light of intelligence; and time and paper would fail, were I to gather the proofs, which so convict common sense of blindness, that whoever would learn of God, must renounce his own wisdom, and seek light from heaven. Therefore, one example is sufficient. Paul calls it a mystery hid from ages, yea concealed from the celestial angels themselves, that God would not have evangelical doctrine, promulgated to the Gentiles, till the coming of Christ. You thrust forward common sense, to subvert this doctrine at its pleasure, as you allow

nothing to be susceptible of proof, of which it is not the judge, and the arbiter. The prophet, speaking of the Providence of God, exclaims, how magnificent are thy works, oh Jehovah, thy thoughts are very deep. *You* deny anything to be divine, which you cannot measure with your own reason. What then is the meaning of Paul, when speaking on this subject, he says, "Oh man, who art thou?" Again, "oh the height and the depth!" He enjoins wonder and astonishment; because all our penetration fails us, when brought to the incomprehensible counsel of God. But you will admit nothing, that is not subjected to your eyes.

Article Fourth.

That all the crimes, which any man commits, are the good and just works of God.

Against the Fourth.

Against the fourth, they loudly urge that passage in Isaiah, "Woe to them who call good evil, and evil good." If sin is a good and just work of God, it follows, that justice

is an evil, and unjust work of God; for justice is entirely contrary to sin. If sin is just, it follows that injustice is just; for sin is injustice. If sin is a work of God, it follows that God commits sin; and if he commits sin, he is the servant of sin, according to the doctrine of Christ. If sin is a work of God, and Christ came to abolish sin, he came to abolish a work of God. But if Christ came to abolish the works of the Devil, as Peter testifies, what are the works of the Devil? If sin is a just work of God, God hates and punishes his own just work; therefore he is unjust.

But if it is objected to them, that sin is not sin in God, it is demanded, in whom then is it sin? Or why does God himself hate it? Or why is sin called sin, unless it is because it is against the law, not of men, but of God? If sin is the work of God, God commits sin, and if God commits sin, he sins; as he who doeth righteousness, is righteous. But if God sins, why does he forbid others to sin. Why does he not rather command men to sin, that they may be his own imitators? For children should follow their parent. "Be ye holy," says he, "for I am holy." Therefore by the same rule it will be said, "Commit ye sin, for I commit sin."

J. Calvin's Reply.

In the fourth article you add to your forgeries; of which fact, I would have readers warned, only on this account, that they may judge of the matter by its own merits, instead of by your fœtid calumnies. Not that I shrink from your objection; I merely complain, that my language is changed, for the malignant purpose of distorting my doctrine, into

something odious. You contend with me just as if I had said, that sin is a just work of God; a sentiment uniformly held up to detestation, in all my writings. Therefore, just in proportion as your puerility seems subtle to yourself, is it in reality ridiculous. You infer that justice is evil, injustice good, that God is the servant of sin, and unjustly punishes what he does himself; all which are monsters fabricated in your own brain, and diligently refuted by me, as my books testify. But you shall by-and-bye feel, how detestable is the crime, to trifle in your railing way with the hidden mysteries of God. Now that you may know you have no business or controversy with me, but with that celestial Judge, whose tribunal you shall not escape; Job, by no other surely than the Spirit's impulse, declares that to have been the work of God, which was done both by Satan and by robbers; and yet he does not tax God with sin but blesses his holy name. It is certain that the selling of innocent Joseph by his brethren, was an atrocious crime; yet Joseph ascribing the same work to God, contemplates his

immense goodness, in thereby giving food to his father's family. When Isaiah calls the Assyrians the rod in the hand of God, he makes God the author of the horrible carnage, which through him was to be effected; but without casting the smallest stain on God. Jeremiah cursing those who did the work of God negligently, means by the work of God, whatsoever cruelty an impious adversary inflicted on the Jews. Now expostulate with him, as if he said that God sinned. In fine, all who are acquainted with the Scriptures, are aware that such testimonies might be multiplied so as to form a volume. But what need is there of words, when the thing is clear of itself. Was it not an illustrious display of the grace of God, that he did not spare his Son? Of Christ too that he gave himself up? Here you, with impure and sacrilegious mouth, affirm that God sinned, if the sacrifice of his Only Begotten Son was his work. But every pious man along with Augustine, has no difficulty in untying this knot. When the Father delivered up the Son, and the Lord his own body, and Judas his Lord, why in this

surrender (48 Ep. to Vin.) is God just and man guilty? If not because in the one thing which they did, the causes were different, on account of which they did it. Therefore, Peter does not scruple openly to assert (Acts iv. 28,) that Pilate, Judas, and the rest of the wicked, did what the counsel and hand of God had decreed; as a little before he had declared (Acts ii. 28,) that Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. If you quibble about the word foreknowledge, you are abundantly refuted by the "determinate counsel;" and the former passage leaves not the shadow of doubt, when it declares that Pilate and the wicked did, what the counsel and the hand of God, had decreed to be done. If you do not comprehend so great a secret, wonder with the apostle, and exclaim, oh the height! but do not madly insult. If you would be teachable, a fuller explanation were ready for you, in my other writings; it is now sufficient to beat down your insolence, lest weak minds should be shaken.

Article Fifth.

That no adultery, theft, or homicide is committed, without the will of God being concerned. Ins. Cap. 14. *Distin.* 44.

Article Sixth.

The Scripture openly testifies, that crimes are appointed not merely by the will, but by the authority of God.

Against the Fifth and Sixth.

Against the fifth and the sixth your adversaries say many things, and these especially. If God wills sin, and is the author of sin, God himself is to be punished. For sin should be visited altogether on its author. If God wills sin, the Devil does not will sin; for the Devil is in all things contrary to God. If God wills sin, he loves sin; and if he loves sin he hates righteousness. If God wills sin, he is worse than many men, for many men are unwilling to sin. Nay, the nearer any one approaches the nature of God, the less he wills sin. Why then does Paul say, the good I would I do not; but the evil I would not, that I do? Why does not Paul will, what God wills? Or why does Paul will what God does not will? Lastly, they demand what Scripture testifies that crimes are appointed not merely by the will but by the authority of God?

J. Calvin's Reply.

It was owing to that very divine providence which you oppose, that you hap-

pened to mark the passage in the fifth article. Readers will perceive, that I am there reciting in the person of my adversaries, the objections which are ordinarily brought against my doctrine. You snatch at that mutilated passage; and do you not deserve that every one should spit in your face? In the sixth article, though you do not specify the place, your impudence makes a still wider bound, that I, who, as often as sin is mentioned, uniformly give the most solemn warnings, that the name of God must be kept wide apart, that *I* should anywhere have said, that crimes are perpetrated not only by the will, but by the authority of God. Certainly I shall willingly suffer anything to be said against a blasphemy so prodigious, only let not my name be so unrighteously coupled with it. How far you succeed in deceiving fools, I know not; but I have no fear, should any one choose to compare your figments with my writings, but your dishonesty will render you execrable as you deserve to be. You contend if God loves sin, he hates righteousness, and you bring forward many things of the same import. For what purpose?

If not to subscribe my language. For it is not yesterday for the first time, nor the day before, but many years since, I have distinctly used this language, (book on Eternal Predestination,) " If in tne spoiling of Job, there was a work common to God, to Satan, and to robbers, how shall God be exempted from whatever blame belongs to Satan and his instruments? Beyond all question human actions are distinguished by their object and design, so that his cruelty is condemned, who digs out crows' eyes, or kills the stork, while the merit of the Judge is praised, who sanctifies his hands by the slaughter of the wicked. And why shall the condition of God be worse, so that his justice may not separate him from the crimes of men?" Let readers only run over what I there subjoin, nay, let them peruse the whole passage in that treatise, where I dispute about the Providence of God, and they will easily perceive, how all your mists are there sufficiently, and more than sufficiently dispelled. Let them add, if they please, what I have written on the second chapter of Acts. When men commit theft or homicide,

they therefore sin, because they are thieves and homicides. Now in theft and homicide, there is a wicked design. God who employs their wickedness, is to be placed in a higher position, for he has an entirely different object, inasmuch as he intends to chastise one, and exercise the patience of another; and thus he never swerves from his nature, that is, from perfect rectitude. Wickedness being always estimated from the design contemplated, it is evident that God is not the author of sin.

The sum of the whole matter is this; since the cause of sin is an evil will in men, when God executes his righteous judgments by their hands, he is so far from being involved in blame, that he brings forth the light of his glory out of darkness. In that tract too, which roused these furies from deep hell against me, the following clear distinction frequently occurs, that nothing is more iniquitous, or more preposterous, than to draw God into fellowship in guilt, when he executes his judgments by the hands of the Devil and the wicked; since there is no affinity in their ways of acting.

Besides I have published a work twelve years since, which more than sufficiently vindicates me from your putid calumnies; and should have protected me from all annoyance, if in you and those like you, there were one drop of humanity; for I boast not how skilfully I have refuted that phrenzy, by which the libertines (those monsters) had fascinated many. It is certain I professedly undertook the management of that cause, and have luminously demonstrated that God is not the author of sin.

Article Seventh.

What men do in sinning they do by the will of God, since very often the will of God is inconsistent with the precept.

Against the Seventh.

On the seventh they ask, if the will of God is often inconsistent with the precept, how is it possible to know when he wills, and when he does not will what he enjoins. For if Calvin say we must always do what God commands, whether he will it or not, it follows that God would sometimes have his will resisted. For if he commands me not to commit adultery and yet wills that I

shall commit adultery, and yet I ought not to do so, I ought, in that case, to act contrary to his will. Now, then, when he gives this universal command to the Israelites, "Do not commit adultery," whether does he will that all should obey him, or that some should, and others not? Here your adversaries demand some distinct reply, Calvin. If you say, that he chooses a part should commit the sin, and a part not, God will be inconsistent with himself in the same precept.

They also allege that God is a hypocrite, if he enjoins one thing, and wills another; that he has honey in his mouth, and gall in his heart. If it is objected to them that God has two wills contrary to each other, the one open, that is to say in his precepts; the other hid; they ask who opened that hidden will to Calvin? For if Calvin and his party know it, it is not hidden; if they are ignorant of it, why do they make assertions about a thing unknown?

They also maintain that two contraries cannot exist together, at the same time, in one subject. But to will at once the same thing, and not to will it, are contraries. Besides, if God have two wills inconsistent with each other, it is credible that Calvin (an imitator of God, of course,) has two wills, and that he says one thing, and thinks another. Therefore we are unwilling to believe Calvin, as a man double-tongued, double-hearted, and double-willed.

Again, if God, when he commands justice, wills injustice, it follows, that the Devil ordering injustice, may will justice. And if God, in saying one thing, and willing another, does not sin, it follows, if any one imitate him in this he does not sin: for to imitate God is certainly not wrong. Therefore it will be lawful to exhort men in this way;—lie, say one thing, and carry another in your breasts, that ye may be like your Father, who says one thing, and wills another.

They also ask, with which will God speaks, when he commands us to pray, "Thy will be done;" and "whosoever doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven,

the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother." So Paul, "Thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and dost approve things that are excellent, and hast learned the law," &c. &c. Certainly here the will of God is what the law commands, and if that will is good, whatever will is contrary must be evil. For whatever is contrary to good is evil. So in regard to the declaration of Christ, "how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not;" Christ certainly speaks of his open will, which had been expressed in so many ways. Now if he had another will contrary to that, his whole life was mere hypocrisy, which is horrible even to think of.

In fine, they say, if God enjoins what he does not will, there are not too wills, but a lie; for whoever says he wills what he does not will, lies; and to command merely in words is to lie, and not to will.

J. Calvin's Reply.

To answer the seventh is no concern of mine. Produce the passage, where I affirm that the will of God is very often contrary to the precept; for such a thing never came into my mind, even in a dream. But on the contrary I have faithfully expounded, amongst other things, how the will of God is simple and one, though between his secret counsel and his doctrine, some seeming discrepancy may appear. Whoever shall modestly and soberly submit to the omnipotent God, will easily understand, so far as the

scanty measure of man's intelligence may reach, how God, who forbids whoredom, and punished the adultery of David by the incest of Absalom, always wills one and the same thing, though in different ways. Therefore, lest the filth of your lies should cast the smallest stain on me, this may be briefly testified to the reader, that your allegations about me holding two contrary wills in God, are most wicked fictions of your own ; since I everywhere teach, that the most perfect harmony subsists between God's hidden counsel, and the outward word of his doctrine. I grant that Augustine mentions different wills ; but these so harmonious with each other, that the last day will demonstrate how consistent he was in all his complicated modes of action.

This being settled, now fight with yourself to your heart's content " about God forbidding what he wishes to be done, or enjoining what he does not wish, and thus commanding his will to be resisted." In all this filth I recognise nothing belonging to me. On the contrary this is the sum of my doctrine. The will of God, which is expressed in the Law, clearly proves that

rectitude is approved by him, and iniquity detested. And beyond all doubt, he would not denounce punishment against evil-doers, if they pleased him. Still what he is not willing should be done, and forbids any one to do, he may, nevertheless, in his own ineffable counsel, determine shall be done for a different end. If you here retort on me, that God is inconsistent with himself, I shall ask in return, does it become you to prescribe the law to him of never transcending the range of your judgment? Moses proclaims that God has his own secrets; while the Law reveals what it is useful for man to know. Will you suppose that nothing is lawful for God, that is not perfectly plain to you? In the book of Job after the depth of his counsel is celebrated, which swallows up all human comprehension, this clause is at length added, "Lo! these are the extremities of his ways, and how little is heard of him!" You will allow no counsel to God, that is not brought under your eye. Now you are either more than blind, or you see that when God in his word forbids you adultery, he is unwilling you should

be an adulterer; and that yet in the adulteries which he condemns, he exercises his just judgments; which undoubtedly he could not do, unless both his knowledge and his will were concerned. If you would have the thing stated more briefly;—he does will that adultery should not be committed, in so far as it is pollution,—a violation of sacred order,—in fine a transgression of the law; in so far as he employs adulteries, and other enormities in the execution of his vengeance, he certainly does not unwillingly discharge the duty of a judge. For though we will not praise the Chaldeans and Assyrians for cruelly wading through scenes of horrid slaughter; yea though God himself declares, that he would be avenged on them; yet again he elsewhere informs us, that sacrifices were in this way prepared for him. Will you deny that God's will is concerned in that which he dignifies with the honourable name of sacrifice. (Is. xxix. and xxxiv. cap.; Jer. xlvi.; Ezek. xxxix.)

At length then awake, and acknowledge that when men are driven headlong by depraved appetite, God in secret and

ineffable ways manages his own judgments. You think the quibble subtle, when you ask; in prohibiting adultery, does God will that all should commit it, or only a part? For if I answer a part, you infer that God is inconsistent with himself. Now you have a definite answer, that God demands chastity of all, because he loves it in all; yet experience itself, though I were silent, shows different ways of willing. For if his will were equally efficacious that all should be chaste, he would without doubt render all chaste. Now as chastity is his peculiar gift, it is easy to infer that he wills differently what he enjoins in the word, from what he realises by the Spirit of regeneration. Nor on this principle, is there any reason that your shameless tongue should upbraid God with hypocrisy; as if he had honey in his mouth, and gall in his heart. For God pretends nothing either in commanding or forbidding; but sincerely reveals his nature. And in that secret counsel by which he guides all the actions of men, you will find nothing contrary to his justice. Whoredom displeases God the author of

chastity; yet the same God determined to punish David by the incestuous outrages of Absalom. Human blood he forbids to be shed, because as he follows his image with his love, so he guards it with his protection; and yet out of impious nations, he raised up executioners of the sons of Eli, because he determined to slay them. Such is the express doctrine of the sacred history. If your blindness is a hindrance to you, yet all who have eyes perceive, that it is quite consistent for God to abhor whoredom and slaughter, in so far as they are sins, or (what comes to the same thing,) to abhor the transgression of his law in whoredom and slaughter, and yet to execute his own judgments, in taking just vengeance on the sins of men, by means of slaughter, and wickedness of every kind.

However dexterous you may fancy your query if there is any secret will of God, how did I happen to find it out; I shall have no difficulty in answering it, provided I may be allowed to follow the Holy Spirit as my master. For if Paul testifies that God dwells in light inacces-

sible; if the same apostle with good reason exclaims that his ways are incomprehensible, why may I not be allowed to admire his secret will though it be concealed from us? The wisdom of God is extolled in the book of Job, with numerous and splendid eulogiums, that mortals may learn not to measure that wisdom by their own apprehensions. Will you then ridicule all discourse about what is concealed? Or will you upbraid David with speaking foolishly of the judgments of God, when he acknowledges them to be a great deep? From all the prophets and apostles, I learn that the divine counsel is incomprehensible. I embrace what they declare with no hesitating faith. Why should this modesty be imputed to me as a fault? And think not to escape by saying, that I refer to examples that are not applicable; for surely I have the very same subject in hand as Paul had, when he exclaims concerning the depth of the riches of wisdom—the incomprehensible judgments, the unsearchable ways of God, in secret election or reprobation;—and yet ceases not openly to assert, that God follows whom

he pleases with mercy, and dooms the rest to destruction.

In fine, give up all fondness for your puerile dilemna, for the Scriptures assure me of the secret will of God; asserting what I have learned from them I do speak of an ascertained truth; but because I do not reach so great a height, I reverently adore with fear and trembling what is too sublime for the angels themselves. Often therefore in my writings I admonish my readers, that on this subject nothing is better than a learned ignorance; for those rave like madmen who arrogate to know more about it than is fit.

You now perceive how confident I am about that will of God, of which the Scriptures are the witnesses; still it is secret, inasmuch as, *why* God wills this to come to pass, or that; and *how* he wills it, even the intellects of angels cannot comprehend; while your pride so far infatuates you and your fellows, as to tempt you to annihilate whatever eludes or transcends your capacity.

Your objections about contrarieties are now sufficiently removed. You attack

me indeed with this scurrility; if I am an imitator of God, you deny that any faith is due to a double-tongued, a double-hearted, and a double-willed man; but it is too foolish to annoy me. By-and-bye you shall know what it is to imitate the Devil, by ascending on high to become like the Highest. That which alone tortures me, is the insane blasphemies wherewith you defile the sacred majesty of God, of which, however, he will himself be the avenger.

As the will of God, which he has delivered in his law, is good, I grant that whatever is contrary to it is evil: but when you babble about the contrariety of that hidden will, by which God distinguishes between the vessels of mercy and the vessels of wrath, and freely uses both according to his pleasure, you exhale a vanity as detestable as it is false, from the fœtid ditch of your ignorance. I confess Christ speaks of his open will, when he says, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, but ye would not;" he casts the same reproach on the Jews, as Moses did in his song.

And indeed we know that God actually performed what these words imply; since the doctrine of the law, the exercises of piety, and the various benefits by which God bound that people to himself, were nothing else than the spreading of his wings for their protection; had not their own unsubdued wildness hurried them elsewhere. When therefore Christ had tried so frequently, and in so many ways, to recall by his prophets, that perverse nation to obedience, he reasonably complains of their ingratitude. For in restricting your remark to the life of Christ, you display your ordinary want of skill, as if he were not the true God, who from the beginning had not ceased to spread over them the wings of his favour. Then, you infer that if he had another will, contrary to his expressed will, his whole life must have been a scene of hypocrisy; as if, forsooth, it were inconsistent to allure by invitation and benefits, and to withhold from the heart, the secret impulse of his Spirit.

That the futility of this calumny may be more manifest, when he complains that he had been disappointed, inasmuch

as the vine which he had expected to bring forth sweet fruit, had produced sour; what is your opinion about this, my worthy turner of sentences? Will you impute ignorance to him, to salve his reputation for veracity? The Jews disappointed God; therefore according to you, while sitting doubtful what would turn out, the event deceived him; as if truly a style of speaking, referring merely to the result itself, could be violently applied to the secret foreknowledge of God.

He says elsewhere, "you will surely fear me;" and they hastened to corrupt their ways. God promises himself some fruit from the punishments inflicted; he afterwards complains that he had been deceived. Can you disentangle yourself from this passage likewise, only by supposing that God is bound by, and dependant on, the free will of man? As if it were not sufficiently clear, that for the purpose of enhancing their crime, he assumes the character of man, who says that his labour is lost, when the result does not correspond. Undoubtedly, those whom God determines efficaciously to gather to

himself, he draws by his Spirit, and as this is entirely dependant on himself, he promises that he will do it. Therefore as many are called, who do not follow, it is perfectly certain that that mode of gathering, which Christ laments as having been fruitless and vain, must differ from the efficacious, of which mention is made elsewhere. As in Isaiah (xi. 12, and lviii. 8; xliii. 5; lii. 12; liv. 7.) "He will gather the dispersed of Judah;" and "the glory of the Lord will gather you." Also "I will gather you from the west." Again "your God will gather you;" and that because he had just before said, that God had bared his arm, to make his power conspicuous in the sight of the nations. And therefore he repeats a little after; "for a moment I have left thee, but with everlasting mercies will I gather thee."

What I have said of the precepts, abundantly suffices to confound your blasphemies. For though God gives no pretended commands, but seriously declares what he wishes and approves; yet it is in one way, that he wills the obedience of his elect whom he effica-

ciously bends to compliance; and in another that of the reprobate whom he warns by the external word, but does not see good to draw to himself. Contumacy and depravity are equally natural to all, so that none is ready and willing to assume the yoke. To some God promises the spirit of obedience; others are left to their own depravity. For however you may prate, the new heart is not promised indiscriminately to all; but peculiarly to the elect, that they may walk in God's precepts. Good critic, what think you of this? When God invites the whole crowd to himself, and withholds knowingly, and willingly his Spirit from the greater part, while he draws the few by his secret influence to obey, must he on that account be condemned as guilty of falsehood?

Article Eighth.

The hardening of Pharaoh, and consequently his obstinacy and rebellion, were the work of God even by the testimony of Moses, who ascribes the whole rebellion of Pharaoh to God.

Article Ninth.

The will of God is the highest cause of the hardening of man.

Against the Eighth and Ninth.

On the eighth and ninth they inquire what Moses means, when he writes that Pharaoh hardened his own heart? Shall we interpret thus; Pharaoh hardened his own heart, that is God hardened Pharaoh's heart. But this truly will be much more violent, than if you were to say God hardened Pharaoh's heart, that is God allowed Pharaoh to remain in the natural hardness of his heart, because Pharaoh had refused to obey him.

In the next place, they ask concerning that passage, "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Now if you interpret this, let not God harden your hearts, it will be very absurd, as it would be enjoining men to do God's work. For if it belongs to God to harden hearts, it is impossible to command men either to harden them, or not to harden them; any more than to add, or take away, a cubit from their stature.

J. Calvin's Reply.

Here again I entreat the honesty of my readers, to compare my language, and the whole strain of my teaching, with your garbled articles. Thus, when your calumny is detected, all the odium which you labour to excite, will vanish of its own accord. Meanwhile, I do not deny, that I have taught along with

Moses and Paul, that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. Here you expostulate with me to the contempt of Moses, and treating his word as of no account, ask "When the same Moses declares, that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, why have recourse to that violent interpretation—God hardened Pharaoh's heart?" Now I need go no further for an explanation, than the ninth article, which while you quote, you either distort or misunderstand. For if the will of God is the highest, or remote cause of hardening, then when man hardens his own heart, he himself is the proximate cause. I everywhere distinguish between primary and remote causes, and those which are mediate and proximate; for while the sinner finds in himself the root of depraved feeling, there is no reason why he should transfer his fault to God. I have somewhere declared that to do so, is just to act like the maid servant of Medea in the ancient Poet, "I would," says she, "that the pines had never fallen in the grove of Pelion, felled with hatchets to the ground." For when an impure woman felt herself stimulated

by her own lust, to betray her father's kingdom, this foolish attendant accuses neither her shameless passion, nor the allurements of Jason, but complains that a ship had been built in Greece. Thus when a man conscious of crime, seeks pretexts of extenuation in remote causes, he ridiculously forgets himself. You now perceive though God in his own way hardens hearts, yet every one is justly responsible for his own hardness, because every one is hardened by his own wickedness.

The case is different when hearts are inclined to obey God. For as by nature we are all prone to contumacy, no one will desire to act aright, unless he is acted upon. And yet when the Scripture says that hearts are prepared by God, and that the faithful prepare themselves to present to God, a voluntary worship; it is not inconsistent with itself, but shows distinctly that divine worshippers perform their duty spontaneously, and with the voluntary affection of their hearts, and yet this is not inconsistent, with God performing his part, by the secret influence of his Spirit. The case is different as I

have already said in regard to hardening. For God does not govern the reprobate by the spirit of regeneration, but subjects and dooms them to the Devil, and by his secret government, so manages their depraved affections, that they do nothing which he has not decreed. These things, therefore, harmonise very well; that however God hardens whom he pleases, yet every one is to himself the cause of his own hardening.

Lest *I* should be tedious, pious, and fair readers may take the help of this remark of Augustine, (Book fifth against Julian, chap. 3,) "Whereas the apostle declares that men are given over to vile affections," this is rashly and unskilfully restricted to sufferance, because the the same Paul elsewhere joins power with sufferance, saying, "if God willing to show his power, endured with much patience the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," &c. And though that holy teacher had never spoken on this subject, the authority of God should of itself be more than enough for us. It is not I who have said that God takes away understanding from princes of the earth, to

cause them to err; or that he held the heart of Pharaoh, that it should not be turned to humanity. I have not said that God turned the hearts of the nations, or strengthened them in hatred of his people, or hissed for the Egyptians and employed them as hammers. *I* have not said that Sennacherib was a rod in God's hand; but the Spirit so pronounces. What? when the Scripture also tells us that Saul was seized by a wicked spirit of God, will you refer this to allowance and permission merely? How much better is the judgment of Augustine, (Book on Holy Predestination.) "If Satan and the wicked sin, it is of themselves; if in sinning they do this or that, it is by the power of God dividing the darkness as he pleases." Whatever God openly declares, you impute to me. Let the same Augustine answer you for me, (On Grace and Free Will to Val.) "Scripture if diligently studied, shows not only that God is the Lord of the good volitions of men, which he himself forms out of evil, and directs them when produced to good results and eternal life; but that those volitions which re-

tain their worldly character, are so in the power of God, that he by a most secret, but most just judgment, inclines them as he pleases, and when he pleases, either to confer blessings, or inflict punishments."

Article Tenth.

Satan is a liar by the command of God. Against the Tenth.

Against the tenth they argue thus. If Satan is a liar by the command of God, a liar is righteous, and Satan is righteous. For if to command a lie is righteous, (as it certainly is, if Calvin speak truth,) then to obey by lying is also righteous; for the righteousness of obedience is estimated by the righteousness of the precept. And as it is unrighteous to obey an unrighteous precept, so to obey a righteous precept is righteous. Now if Calvin say that Satan is not obedient in lying, that is, that he has no intention of obeying God, we will reply according to Calvin's own opinion, that this disobedient lying likewise, is done by the command of God; and that in this disobedient lying also, Satan is obedient; inasmuch as God has commanded him not to be obedient in lying.

J. Calvin's Reply.

In the tenth article, behold against whom you hurl your virulent darts. For

it is no peculiarity of mine that you oppose, but the dictate of the Spirit of God. Thus the Scripture speaks expressly, whom shall I send, and who will go for us; and immediately after, God, addressing Satan, bids him go, to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets, to deceive Ahab. Now bark as much as you please; you will no more bury the glory of God by your railing, than you will by spitting darken the glory of the sun. Here too it is better to speak in the words of Augustine, than in my own. "When God testifies that he sends false prophets, and that his hand is upon them that they may deceive, he does not mean that his patience alone is concerned, but his power also." As to your prating about Satan not being obedient in lying by the command of God, it is not wonderful if you entangle yourself in many knots, by not acknowledging that God in an inexplicable way, so employs at his pleasure the working of Satan, as to illustrate the justice and equity of his own government; without, however, freeing his instrument from blame, whom he compels against his own

will to execute the divine judgment. Though your bitterness should rail a hundred times, this certainly is not the voice of Calvin, but of God; "I have commanded my sanctified ones." (Is. xiii. 3.) Now if you imagine that God takes more to himself than is proper, he will himself find out a way to be freed from your accusation.

Article Eleventh.

God gives will to those doing wrong; he even suggests wicked and dishonourable affections, not only permissively but efficaciously, and that for his own glory.

Against the Eleventh.

Against the eleventh they allege: Calvin refers to God what belongs to the Devil, as the Scripture everywhere testifies. Now if God suggests wicked and dishonourable affections, and yet commands us to resist such affections, he commands us to resist himself. Every good gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights. Are wicked affections even, a good gift? Does darkness (for depraved affections are certainly darkness,) descend from the Father of lights? Why then is he not called the Father of darkness? James distinctly writes that no man is tempted by God, but every one by his own lust. But to suggest base affections, is to tempt. Now as for your salvo about

God doing this for his own glory, they say it is ridiculous, for glory does not ordinarily accrue from lying. When Nebuchadnezzar experienced the divine justice and power, in being changed for his pride into a brute nature, he ascribed glory to God, for he perceived and concluded that God is just.

It is God's pleasure to be praised by all nations; "praise the Lord all ye nations." It behoves him, therefore, to do those things, which all nations may be able to know, and moreover praise. But no nation will ever acknowledge, that it is just to punish men, for what God himself has suggested. For we ask, if God should punish us for having a beard, would he not do us an injury; when he himself has given us the beard, and it was not optional whether we should have it or not? What man with a beard could ever praise him? Now if Calvin will say that this is the secret Providence of God, and to us unknown, we shall answer that God has indeed secrets unknown to us; but so far as justice is concerned, it is known to us and revealed in the Gospel: according to which revealed Gospel, (as Paul teaches), and not according to that hidden judgment of Calvin, God will judge the world. And so it will be understood by all, both righteous and wicked. For all, both righteous and wicked, will see that it is just that they who have disobeyed the truth, (not hidden like Calvin's,) but open like that of the Gospel, should be punished; and that they who have obeyed it should receive reward. "The wrath of God," says Paul, "is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." But if the opinion of Calvin is true, the wrath of God is revealed against all the innocent. For if he suggests depraved affections, he is angry and hates them before the depraved affections. For to suggest depraved affections is a work of hatred; he consequently hates the innocent, inasmuch as sin springs from depraved affections, or rather sin is depraved affection.

J. Calvin's Reply.

You go on imagining monsters, that having vanquished them, you may celebrate a triumph over an unoffending servant of God. The passage where I have ever spoken thus, you will not find; and therefore though I were silent, your mingled folly and impudence are alike powerless. If the wicked defile themselves by slaughter, adultery, rapine, fraud, I teach that this comes of their own wickedness; that God, however, who brings light out of darkness, so rules within them, by his own secret and incomprehensible government, as by means of their wickedness, to execute his just determinations. If you oppose this, contend with God himself, who will easily receive your insane assaults. If you had one drop of modesty and docility, this distinction which constantly occurs in my writings, would undoubtedly appease you.

If the wicked examine themselves, the testimony of conscience will abundantly convince them that they must not seek elsewhere for criminality, because they

find the root of wickedness within, in their own hearts; and yet God by swaying their volitions withersoever he pleaseth, makes a good use of their evil. Murmur as you please I have now clearly shown, that in doing so, your quarrel is not with me but with God. I would that from the heart you did acknowledge God as the Father of lights, just as the Apostle Paul defines him, (1 Tim. vi.) lest in your audacity you break through to the inaccessible light, nay, lest in your sacrilegious insolence you turn that light into darkness.

Moreover, you absurdly infer from the doctrine of James, because every perfect gift descends from the Father of lights, therefore awful judgments that strike the pious with fear and trembling, do not descend from the same source. You still more absurdly ask me, whether I reckon vicious and perverse affections among good gifts; as if forsooth the spirit of wisdom, judgment and prudence, differed not at all from the spirit of sleep and giddiness; as if too the spirit of regeneration, which renews the faithful in the image of God, were none other than that

evil spirit of God, who drives the reprobate to phrenzy, as we read of Saul.

With similar shamelessness you clamour about my teaching that God executes his determinations for his own glory, by means of Satan and the reprobate. That Satan is the instrument of his anger, God clearly testifies both by his word, and by experience. Now with what design shall we say that God does work by the hand of Satan, if not to illustrate his own glory? You think you elude this by a witty retort, that righteousness is not ascribed to God on account of lying; but will you hinder God from bringing forth from your wickedness, the materials of his own glory? Certainly by nothing less than his outrageous pride, could Pharaoh prevent the divine glory from shining forth, inasmuch as he had been ordained to this very end.

You allege that Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iv. 34,) gave glory to God when he confessed his justice; and to show you with what confidence I despise your blunt darts, I willingly lend you a hand in this matter, and suggest what you did not

think of; that when Joshua exhorted Achan to give glory to God, it is with no other design than that the latter should disclose the lie, and discover his own sacrilege.

But the question now is, whether there is only one way of illustrating the divine glory, for if this do not shine forth by the lies of men, Paul must have been at fault, when he said, "let God be true and every man a liar," and immediately asks, "if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, is God himself unrighteous?"

As to your objection, that God would be praised for his benefits, it is indeed true, provided you allow, that the wood out of which God brings and leads forth his praises, is both thick and extensive. And here your pride, in ostentatiously despising the art of reasoning, is suitably punished, as you are always arguing negatively from the species to the genus. Nor will I honour with any long refutation your scurrilous jibe that God were unjust to punish men for having a beard, inasmuch as they only carry the beard which he himself has created. For who has ever said that iniquity was created

by God? Though he does ordain it in his incomprehensible counsel, to just and righteous ends. Begone, then, with that foolery of yours, of confounding the beard which naturally grows in sleep, with voluntary wickedness. Play the madman as you please, this will remain fixed with us, that they are justly punished, whose wicked affections are ordained and directed by God to the execution of his judgments, because their own consciences condemn them. And see how you entangle yourself; for while you acknowledge that God's secrets are unknown to us, you on the other hand object that his justice is known to us. But if any one should ask you, is there any justice in God's secrets, or is there not, will you deny that there is any?

Moreover, how will you say that God's justice is known to us, when David and Paul look up to it with astonishment, because their sense fails them? Do the mighty abyss, and the rich depth of wisdom, in the judgments of God, contain justice in themselves? Why then will you deny that God is just, whenever the

reason of his operations is concealed from you.

As a distinction worthy of notice, is made in the Book of Job, (c. xxviii.) between the unsearchable wisdom of God, from which the human race is warned off, and that wisdom which has been delivered to us in the law; so you also, unless you mean to confound everything, should have distinguished between that profound and admirable justice, which cannot be comprehended by the human mind, and the rule of justice which is prescribed in the law, for the regulation of the life of man. I acknowledge that God will judge the world, according to the revealed doctrine of the Gospel; but he will at the same time vindicate the equity of his secret providence against all wranglers.

Now, if you had the smallest experimental acquaintance, with that Gospel which you prate about, you would easily understand how God remunerates the justice which is commanded in his law, and never defrauds those of the promised crown, who heartily obey his precepts; and yet justly punishes all the disobe-

dient, whom he also terms his servants, because he has their hearts in his hand. Thus, Nebuchadnezzar, a furious robber, and slave of Satan, is not without reason called by Jeremiah a servant of God. (Jer. xxv. 9.) And if I have taught that God opens up a way for his own purposes, by inciting the hearts of men this way and that, why should the statement be imputed to me as a crime, when prophets have said precisely the same thing; these being in fact the words of the sacred history, (2 Sam. xxiv. 1,) "And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel; and he moved David against them to say, Go, number the people."

Article Twelfth.

The wicked, by their wickedness, do God's work rather than their own.

Against the Twelfth.

Of the twelfth they discourse thus, if it be so, God is angry with what is good; for if impiety is the work of God, impiety is good; for all the works of God are good. And if impiety is good, then piety is evil, inas-

much as it is the opposite of impiety. Therefore, when Scripture says, "hate evil," "love good," it enjoins the love of impiety, and the hatred of piety. They allege besides, that such an article, savours sufficiently of a kind of Libertinism, and they are surprised you are so hostile to Libertines.

J. Calvin's Reply.

I again testify before God, angels, and the whole world, that I never spake thus, and that what was correctly spoken by me, is most wickedly and calumniously perverted by you. But if it seem absurd to you that the wicked should do God's work, upbraid Jeremiah, whose words these are "Cursed is the man who doeth God's work negligently." Now, he refers to a massacre, which you will not clear of criminality, as it is manifest, it was prompted by avarice, cruelty, and pride. The Chaldeans were impelled by their own ambition, and lust of plunder, to forget equity, and inhumanly to wade through rapine and carnage. But as it pleased God by their hands to punish the Moabites, their wickedness did not prevent the execution of the divine judgment. Here, dog, your bark is, then impiety is good; as if God were impious, when he

accommodates in his own wonderful way, human wickedness, to a different end from that intended by the perpetrator. Nay, you scruple not to taunt me with the Libertines, a sect whose ravings have been by me especially exposed, so that I have no new defence to offer.

Article Thirteenth.

We sin necessarily by the design of God, when we sin by our own, or by chance.

Article Fourteenth.

The wickedness which men perpetrate by their own volition, proceeds also from the volition of God.

Against the Thirteenth and Fourteenth.

Against the thirteenth and fourteenth, they argue in this way. If we sin necessarily, all admonitions are in vain. In vain are the people admonished by Jeremiah, "I set before you the way of life and death. Whoever shall remain in this city, shall die by the sword, by famine, or pestilence: but he who flees to the Chaldeans shall live." These things, I say, were declared to them in vain, if it were as impossible for them to flee to the Chaldeans, as to swallow a mountain. Now if Calvin shall say, that precepts are given for the purpose of ren-

dering men inexcusable, we reply that this is futile. For if you command your son to eat a rock, and he do it not, he is no more inexcusable after the injunction than before. In the same way if God say to me do not steal, and I steal necessarily, and I can no more abstain from stealing, than I can eat a rock, I am no more inexcusable after the precept than before, nor more excusable, before the precept than after.

In fine, if Calvin's opinion is true, a man is inexcusable even before the precept; so that there is no occasion for a precept to ensure that inexcusableness. For if the wicked man is reprobate, before he is wicked, that is, before he exists, viz. from Eternity, and so sins necessarily, he is already inexcusable, and condemned before the precept, which is against all laws divine and human. For all laws condemn a man after the crime, and on account of the crime. But that God of Calvin condemned and reprobated the wicked before they existed, not to say before they were wicked, or had sinned; and because he condemned them before they sinned, he compels them to sin, that he may appear, forsooth, to have condemned them justly. In fine, Calvin, they here contrast your God, and theirs in this way.

The Nature of a False God.

A false God is slow to mercy, prone to anger, creating the greatest part of the world for destruction, and predestinating them not only to damnation, but to the causes of damnation. Therefore he decreed from eternity, and still determines, and brings it about, that they should sin necessarily, so that neither thefts, nor adulteries, nor homicides are committed, except by his will and impulse. For he suggests to them wicked and base affections, not only permissively but efficaciously, and hardens them; so that while they live impiously, they do God's work rather than their own, and cannot do otherwise. He makes Satan a liar; so that it is no longer Satan, but the God of Calvin, who is the father of lies, as he has often one thing in his mouth, and another in his heart.

The Nature of the True God.

But the God whom nature and reason, and Scripture proclaim is evidently opposed to the other, for he is prone to mercy, and slow to anger. He created the common father of all in his own image, like himself, that he might place him in paradise, and endow him with a blessed existence. This God wishes all to be saved, and none to perish; and therefore sent his Son to earth, whose righteousness more than abounded where sin abounded, and the light of whose righteousness illumines every man that comes into the world, while he exclaims, "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He suggests good and honourable affections, and frees men from the necessity of sinning into which they had cast themselves by disobedience, and heals all manner of sickness and disease among the people, so that he never denied a favour to any one that besought him.

Now this God comes to destroy the works of that Calvinistic God, and to turn him out of doors. And these two Gods as they are by nature contrary to one another, so they beget children equally unlike. The one produces children who are merciless, proud, savage, envious, sanguinary, false, thinking one thing, and speaking another, impatient, malicious, seditious, contentious, ambitious, avaricious, lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God; in a word, filled with all bad and vile affections, which their Father himself inspires them with. But the other God produces men, who are merciful, modest, meek, benevolent, beneficent, abhorring blood, open, speaking truth from the fulness of the heart, patient, benign, placable, peaceable, abhorring quarrels and strife, despisers of honour, liberal, lovers of God, more than the lovers of pleasure; in fine filled with all good and honourable affections, which their own Father inspires them with.

Such are the things, Oh Calvin, which your adversaries allege respecting your doctrine; and they advise men to judge of the doctrine by the fruit. Now they

affirm that you and your disciples, bring forth many of the fruits of your God; for that you are generally litigious, eager for vengeance, tenacious and mindful of an injury, and tainted with the other vices which your Father inspires. But if any one should say that this is not the fault of the doctrine which is sound, and does not produce such men; they reply that it does produce such men, which is evident from the fact, that many who have adopted that creed, are become such, while formerly they were not so wicked. Whereas those who believe the doctrine of Christ become better; but they say that your doctrine evidently makes men worse.

Besides, when you maintain that you have sound doctrine, they reply that you are not to be believed. For, if your God very often says one thing, and thinks and wills another, there is reason to fear that in imitation of your God, you are doing the same thing, and deceiving men.

It is true, I have at one time, been rather fond of your doctrine, and have defended it though it has not been altogether satisfactory to me; because I have attributed so much to your authority, as to imagine it unlawful even to think anything in opposition to it. But now that I have listened to the arguments of your adversaries, I have nothing to reply. Your disciples doubtless attempt a reply, and among their own partizans, loudly boast of the truth; but when they close with your adversaries, they waver, and seek a poor protection in your books. For your reasons are obscure, and are almost entirely of the sort, which fall out of the memory, as soon as the book is laid aside, and yield no conviction to opposers. Whereas the arguments of your adversaries, are clear, keen, easily remembered, and apprehensible by the illiterate—the very description of men who chiefly followed Christ. Hence it happens that your disciples, in general, lean more on your authority, than on reason. And when they cannot refute their opponents, they regard them as heretics, and obstinate persons, withdraw from their society and warn all to do the same. Now,

as it is my opinion, that we should attend to what is said, and not to the person speaking, so I judge that all must be heard. and every thing proved, that what is good may be held fast.

Wherefore, Oh Calvin, if you have any true, plain, solid arguments, by which the adversaries may be repelled, I entreat you to publish them for the defence of the truth. You know what is written, "a mouth and a wisdom shall be given you, which none shall be able to resist." For my part, wherever I can lay hold of truth, I am prepared to follow; as well as to exhort others to do the same. But if by chance you are mistaken, I beseech you, Calvin, give glory to God. That will be more honourable to you, than to persevere in error. If you are just and true, I do not think I need entertain any fears about your indignation, on account of this epistle. In the first place, because it belongs to you to be informed of these things; and in the next place, because if you feel (as you say,) that all things come to pass necessarily, you will believe also that it was impossible, that this letter should not have been written by me. Farewell.

J. Calvin's Reply.

What you mean in the last article but one, I no more understand, than if you intended to confound human apprehension by magical mutterings. For what is it to sin by chance? And who, except yourself has conjured up such monsters? I have said somewhere, that those things which seem to happen by chance, are governed by the secret Providence of God. Who will allow you to

infer from this that sin is fortuitous? And then as for what is found in my writings, did it originate with me? Or has it not rather God for its author? If the hatchet of a man cutting the branches of a tree, fall and wound the head of a passenger, will you regard this as a matter of chance? But the Holy Spirit, by Moses, declares that such a man is slain by God. Will you say that God, like one drunk, deals his blows at random, right and left, without discrimination?

Now if you fancy that men sin without the knowledge of God, how will God judge the world? And if the transactions of the world escape his notice, how will he have the advantage of mortals? Because I maintain that God is perfectly aware of the sins of men, you go so far in your phrenzy, as to accuse me of framing a false God. If I should grant you what you demand, that God is ignorant of sin, what kind of God pray you will he be? And will you still boast that the people are with you, when depriving God of intelligence, and dignifying him with the same title that Lucretius did his

images, you fabricate a dead idol in his place?

As to your argument that teaching is superfluous, precepts useless, admonitions vain, upbraiding and threats absurd, if men sin necessarily; if Augustine's book to Valentinus, "Concerning Corruption and Grace," a work expressly devoted to this subject, is not sufficient to dissipate these objections, you are unworthy to hear a word from me. As my refutation of Pighius, and your master Servetus, in regard to this calumny, is quite satisfactory to all reasonable and candid readers, I will now merely return this brief answer to your boasting. If you will allow God to command nothing, that man has not power to obey, God will make it plain enough, when he shall place you at his tribunal, that he made no vain assertion by the mouth of his apostle, when he declared that to be impossible to the law, which he himself performed by his own grace. (Rom. viii. 4.) It is certain that a perfect righteousness is exhibited in the law, which would be prepared and set forth to all, if our strength were adequate to yield obedi-

ence to the commands of God. Now Paul declares it was impossible to attain to righteousness by the law. What dispute then have you on this point with Calvin? If you steal necessarily, you suppose that you are no less excusable, after the precept than before. Paul, on the contrary, when he confesses that he was sold under sin, at the same time freely exclaims, that the law worketh wrath, because the shield of necessity is in vain held forth, when every man is convicted by his conscience of voluntary malignity. Tell me, when the hook was in your hand, of late years, for the purpose of stealing wood, to warm your house, was it not your own will that prompted you to steal? If this alone suffice for your just condemnation, that knowingly and willingly you snatched at a base and wicked gain, by your neighbour's loss, you may rave as you please about necessity, without being in the least justly acquitted. As to your objection, that no one is justly condemned, unless on account of crime, and after crime, I have no quarrel with you on the former point, since I everywhere teach

that no one perishes, except by the just judgment of God. At the same time I may not dissemble that a secret venom lurks in your language; for if the similitude you propose is admitted, God will be unjust for involving the whole family of Abraham, in the guilt of original sin.

You deny that it is lawful for God to condemn any man, except on account of actual sin. Innumerable infants are, to this day, hurried out of life. Discharge now your virulence against God, for precipitating into eternal death innocent babes torn from their mother's breasts. Whoever detests not this blasphemy, when it is openly detected, may curse me to his heart's content. For I have no right to demand exemption from the railings of those who spare not the Almighty himself.

As to the latter point, do you not see how offensive is your loquacity. For even your master Servetus, and Pighius, and such like dogs, would say at least, that those were condemned before the creation of the world, whom God foreknew to be worthy of death. You, forsooth, will not allow him to doom any

one to eternal death, till such time as he becomes obnoxious to earthly judges, by the actual perpetration of crime. Hence let the reader learn how prodigious must be that phrenzy, which unhesitatingly subverts by jeer and banter, the whole course of divine justice.

It remains that I vindicate the glory of the true and eternal God, from your sacrilegious revilings. You loudly charge me with thrusting the Devil into the place of the true God. My defence is brief and easy. As all my writings clearly testify, that I had no other design, than that the whole world, should piously and holily devote itself to God; and that all should cultivate in good conscience true righteousness with each other; so my life is not inconsistent with my doctrine; nor will I be so unjust to the grace of God, as to compare myself with you, and those like you, whose innocence is nothing more than compliment and self-flattery. This only will I say, if any upright and fair judge should decide betwixt us, he would readily recognise reverence for God, both in my writings, and in my life; while everything proceeding from

you, savours of nothing but mere burlesque upon religion.

Now, briefly to confound your calumnies, can anything surpass your want of principle in contending that God would be slow to mercy, and prone to anger, if he ordained the greater part of the world to eternal death? Beyond all question, fancy what kind of God you please, he alone is to be worshipped by all the pious; who, with the exception of the family of Abraham, suffered the whole human family to wander in fatal darkness, for more than twenty-five hundred years. If you charge him with cruelty, for determining that innumerable nations should be overwhelmed in death, while one family alone was distinguished by the life giving light; the answer is evident, that while the nations were spared from day to day, and the world was not swallowed up a hundred times in a year, just as often did God afford illustrious displays of his patience. Nor in truth has Paul any hesitation in praising God's lenity and long-suffering, even when he maintains, that the vessels of wrath were fitted for destruction, by his secret de-

cree. If you are not satisfied with his testimony, I think I may safely despise your barking. For God needs no defence at my hand, but will sufficiently vindicate his own justice, although all impure tongues should emulously conspire to overshadow it. Wherefore, you and your gang, may hurl aloft your blasphemies as you please, to fall back again on your own heads. It is no hardship to me, patiently to endure your revilings, provided the God whom I serve is not reached; and I must be allowed to summon you to his tribunal, where he will in his own time appear, to avenge that doctrine, which in my person you furiously oppose.

Readers of any discernment will appreciate the value of your discourse, about the nature of the true God, when they observe that in all inquiry upon the subject, you make common sense the starting point. The existence of God it is true was admitted by all nations and ages; since the principle and seed of this knowledge, was naturally implanted in the mind of man. But how shall reason define what God is, when with all

her perspicacity, she can do nothing but turn the truth of God into a lie, thereby adulterating all the knowledge and light of true faith and religion? The Holy Spirit commands us to become fools, if we would be disciples of the heavenly doctrine; inasmuch as the natural man is unable to receive or taste aught of it. You on the other hand would have the human faculty decide on the mysteries of God; and reason, which in its blindness, utterly extinguishes the divine glory, you not only set up as a guide and mistress, but presume to prefer to Scripture itself. So that, it is not wonderful if you allow the most opposite religions to be promiscuously confounded; esteeming the Turk steeped in the dreams of Mahomet, and adoring, I know not what, unknown divinity, no less a worshipper of the true God, than the Christian, who with the unwavering faith of the Gospel, calls on the Father of our Redeemer. Now, although so many indirect jeers at all the first principles of our faith do not *aloud* declare that you are the open, earnest patron of the infidels, yet your object was, by palliating the superstitions

of all nations, to subvert the religion of the sacred oracles of the true God. From that reason doubtless, which is the mother of all errors, has sprung that God of yours, who indiscriminately resolves that all shall be saved. As if forsooth, the word election which occurs so often in the Scriptures, had absolutely no meaning; when the law, the prophets, and the Gospel, everywhere proclaim, that they are called and enlightened to salvation, who were chosen in God's eternal counsel before the foundation of the world; and unambiguously declare that the fountain and cause of life, is the free love of God, which embraced not all, but whom he pleased. What do you gain by a hundred railings on the other side? You bewilder the simple by raising a mist, about God wishing all to be saved. If this is inconsistent with that election, predestinated his own children to life, I demand why the way of salvation is not thrown open to all. That eulogium of the law is well known and celebrated, "behold I have this day set before you life and death." If God determined to gather all without distinction into salva-

tion, why did he not set life equally before all, instead of distinguishing but one nation by this prerogative; and that for no other reason, if we believe Moses, except his free favour for those, whom he chose for his own.

You say that Christ was divinely sent, in order that his righteousness might superabound wherever sin abounded. But this one word proves, that you came forth from beneath, at the prompting of Satan. You insolently deride Christ, while you seek to cover up every, the grossest, falsehood, in the colours of piety. For if the righteousness of Christ has superabounded, wherever sin abounded, the condition of Pilate or Judas, will be no worse than that of Peter or Paul. And though I should say nothing of Pilate, Paul denies that the righteousness of Christ, can be separated from the faith of the Gospel, (Eph. vi. 9.) Will you tell us what Gospel was in France, and other remote nations at the time when Christ lived on earth? What? Was God not the same before the coming of his Son? Why then did he seal up the treasure of salvation till the fulness of time? You

must burst into laughter at Paul's doctrine, about the mystery being hid before in God, which was revealed in the promulgation of the Gospel. And now that the sound of the Gospel is proclaimed, the righteousness of Christ comes to none but those, who receive it by faith. Now whence have you faith? If you answer by hearing; it is indeed true; but the hearing is not independent of the special revelation of the Spirit, Isaiah (liii. 1,) exclaims in surprise, at the fewness of those to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed; and when Paul restricts the gift of faith to the elect, he refers to that passage as evidence. You allow no distinction. Christ indeed cries, "Come unto me all ye that labour," but he also exclaims in another place, "no man comes to me, except the Father draw him." Nor does he contradict himself, when inviting all without exception by the external voice, he yet declares that no man perceives anything, except as it is given him from heaven; and that none come to him except those who are given him by the Father.

Another passage you no less foully be-

smear, with your swinish snout; (John i. 4,) alleging that every man that comes into the world, is illuminated with the light of Christ's righteousness. As if John did not add immediately after; "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not;" intending to declare, that whatever reason and intelligence had been given to men at first, were suffocated and almost destroyed; and that the only remedy remaining, is the light which Christ bestows on the blind. It is no doubt true, that Christ denied mercy to none that asked it; but you do not reflect that vows and prayers are dictated by the Holy Spirit; nay that faith which is the fruit of gratuitous election, is the key which opens the gate to prayers.

While you are ignorant of these first principles, the denial of which reduces the gospel to a level with the rites of Proserpine and Bacchus, it is surprising that any called christians should be found, entangling themselves with errors so enormous. As to your flippant insolence, about my disciples being like my God, cruel, envious, calumnious, proud,

carrying one thing on their tongue, another in their heart, I will undertake to refute it not so much by word, as by fact. As I have no delight in evil speaking, let your crimes remain unnoticed by me; except that I am at liberty, and it is worth while, to testify before God to this one thing, that although I have fed you in my house, I never beheld a man prouder, more deceitful, or more destitute of humanity than yourself. That man is without all judgment, who does not perceive you to be, at once an impostor, an abandoned cynic in your impudence, and a buffoon avowedly scoffing at religion. I would fain know in what you accuse me of barbarity; unless possibly you refer to your master Servetus; yet the judges themselves, two of whom were his zealous patrons, are witnesses to the fact of my having interceded in his behalf. But enough of myself, and more than enough.

What fruits my doctrine produces, not only in this city, but wide and far through many lands, I leave for the consideration of all. From this school, which you so atrociously assail, God daily chooses vic-

tims, of the best and sweetest odour, to illustrate the doctrine of his Gospel. The students there, (of whom the number at least is respectable,) exemplify a painful abstinence, and yet are conspicuous for patience and gentleness; or discarding former luxuries, they are forward and contented in the practice of frugality. Denying themselves and the world, they all aspire to the hope of a blessed immortality. But because it is inexpedient for me to boast, let the Lord answer for me, by those displays of his favour, which he has given in behalf of that doctrine, which is in vain assailed by your fœtid abuse.

But I should like to be informed by you, respecting your character, when you favoured this doctrine. You allege that it had not been sufficiently understood by you, in consequence of your being hampered by my authority, so that you held it unlawful to form any opposite opinion. You must assuredly have been too dull, not to comprehend in several years, what I both taught you familiarly at home, and so frequently expounded in your hearing in the public assembly.

Now there are many competent witnesses to prove, that although I failed in the various attempts I made to correct and cure your depravity of temper, yet so long as you kept up appearances with me, you were restrained as by a bridle; so that the cause of your alienation, may well seem to have been, that very licentiousness, which sought uncurbed, to break to the impiety in which you now glory.

You tell us you mind what is said, not who speaks. Would that you had brought yourself before this, candidly to profit by the labours of others, and thus to form a habit of docility. As it is, your only accomplishments being audacity and garrulity, you seek consequence for yourself, by despising others. For my part, I arrogate nothing to myself, but I think I have deserved this of the church, that if I may rank among the faithful servants of God, my authority should not be rendered odious. If you said that a few unlearned men hung on my nod, or were influenced by my reputation, you might give some colour to your calumny; but now while you make

it my fault that illiterate men are displeased with my doctrine, who will believe you that learned and ingenious men alone relish my books; nay that such men are held thunderstruck by mere authority, from forming an independent opinion?

So far as your authority goes then, nothing is proved that is not rendered plausible to the vulgar. And this, forsooth, is the reason why you deter all from liberal learning; and to gain more disciples, boast to your followers, that all study is vain and frivolous, which is employed in philosophy, logic, and other arts, and even in theology itself. You object that the followers of Christ were of this character; as if there were any inconsistency between literature, and the Christian faith. Here let readers observe the difference between you and me. I maintain that the wisest men are blinded by their own pride, and never even taste the heavenly doctrine, till such time as they become fools, and commanding their own notions to be gone, devote themselves in meek simplicity to the obedience of Christ. For human

reason is utterly undiscerning, and human acuteness stupid, in the mysteries of God. Therefore, I say that humility is the beginning of true wisdom; a humility that empties us of all carnal wisdom, so that faith may begin in reverence for divine mysteries. You invite illiterate men to come forward, and despising all learning, and inflated merely with the breath of arrogance, audaciously to decide on the mysteries of heaven; nor will you acknowledge any as legitimate arbiters, except those, who satisfied with common notions, stoutly reject whatever does not suit their fancy.

The Apostle Paul will easily answer another reproach, which you cast on my disciples, for they have his authority, for leaving you and such like heretics to yourselves; rather than by listening to you, voluntarily to pollute their ears with your blasphemies. You deny that such is the proper course, for that all should be heard. As if, indeed, there were no meaning in the command, to avoid a heretic who refuses to repent, after the second and third solemn admonition. If any man denied you a hearing, you

would have some ground for complaint; but when you went away vanquished from the public assembly, at which you had full scope to babble, nay to which you had been summoned and almost dragged; what limit, pray, will there be, if pious ears must be always open, till your appetite for God-reviling may be satiated? You take no ordinary pleasure in ridiculing all pious principles. Would you have the sons of God so stupid, as either to be pleased with your insolence, or to listen unmoved to your sacrilegious reviling.

So far as the cause itself is concerned I am confident I have so answered you, that all judicious readers may easily discern, that that Spirit has not been withheld from me, to whom it belongs to grant a mouth and wisdom, which if you persist in resisting, you will betray an obstinacy equalled only by your disgrace. I shall not cease to wish and to pray, though I dare scarcely hope, that you may at length yield to manifest truth.

As to your concluding cavil, that I have no reason to be provoked at your abuse, if I believe that your writing was neces-

sary; it is indeed to my mind a serious and efficacious exhortation to self-possession, inasmuch as nothing is more useful, or better adapted, for bridling indignation, than David's admonition, "let him curse for God has so commanded." David, it is true, was well aware that Shimei was instigated by that same lust for railing, with which you now boil; but believing that the impetuous abuse, which the railer fancied himself uttering at random, was ordered by the secret Providence of God, the monarch is restrained by his religious convictions. For no man will ever endure with calm moderation, the assaults of the Devil and the wicked, who does not turn his thoughts from them to God alone.

May God quell thee, Satan! Amen!

Geneva, 5th January, 1558.

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